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# FORENSIC ELOQUENCE.

A TREATISE ON THE

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THEORY and PRACTICE

OF

## ORATORY

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN GREAT SPEECHES OF  
FAMOUS ORATORS.

A MANUAL FOR

TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND PUBLIC SPEAKERS AND  
FOR USE IN HIGH SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

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BY JOHN GOSS, A. M.

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THE S. CARSON COMPANY,  
PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS,  
208 POST ST.,  
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.  
1891.



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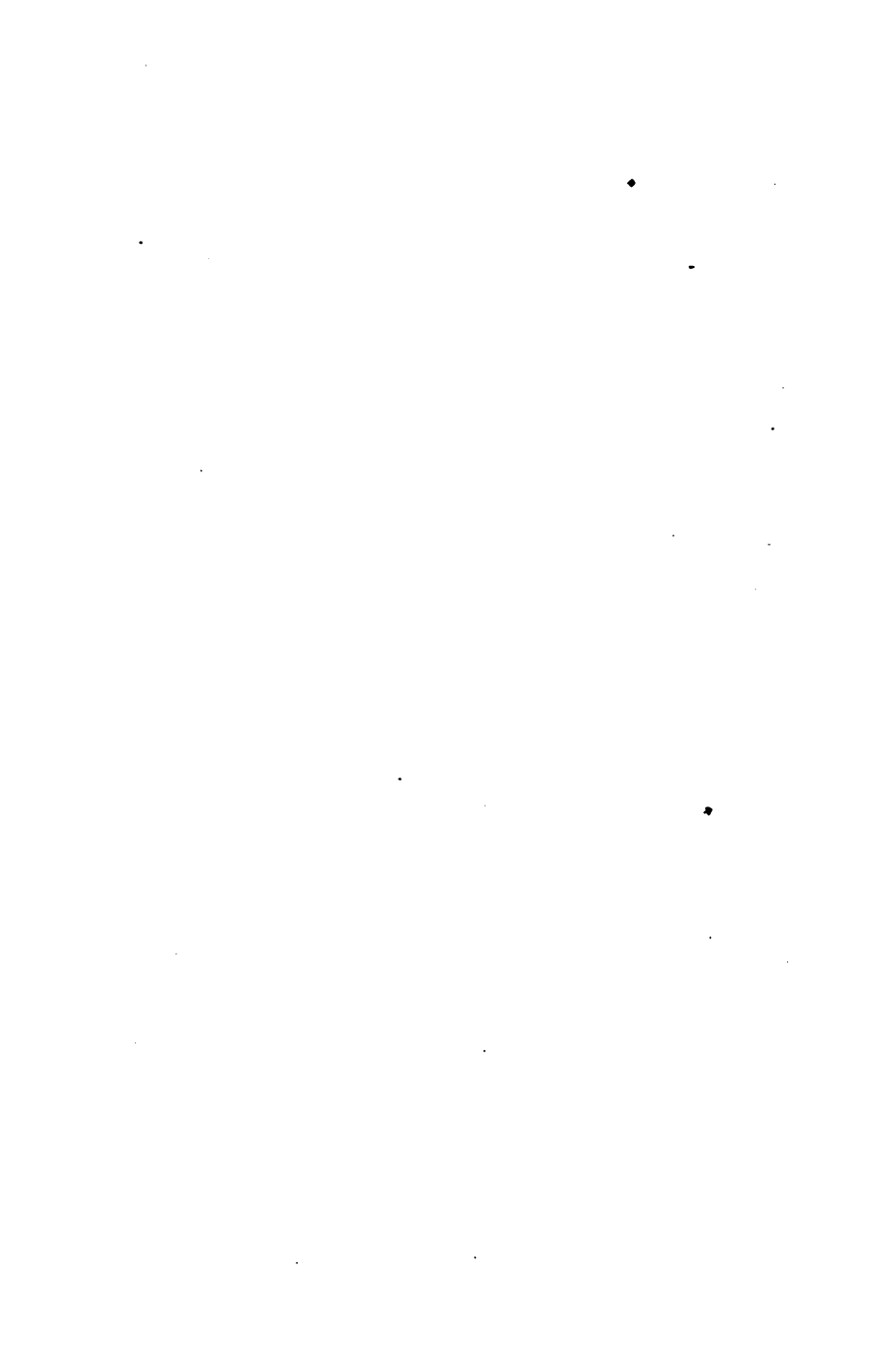
*PACIFIC PRESS,  
Printers, Stationers, and  
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Oakland and San Francisco.*

TO

MARTIN KELLOGG,

Professor of the Latin language and literature, and  
Acting President of the University of California, as  
a slight token of my appreciation for his ripe scholarship, high Christian character, and his many great qualities of mind and heart which endear him to a generation of California students, as well as a feeble tribute to a life devoted to classical learning, I, a former pupil, dedicate these pages.

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In developing this system, I have shown when, where and how oratorical skill is displayed. I have endeavored to show that it comes from a well-trained mind, a noble purpose and a natural elocution.

I believe a speech, like an edifice, should have a solid foundation, a substantial superstructure and a suitable finish.

The necessity, utility and importance of public speaking are the first subjects considered in this volume; but in addition, I might say that the remarks of Cicero, in speaking of Roman oratory, that, while distinguished names shone out in all branches of learning, such as mathematics, generalship, music and philosophy, Rome had few great orators, has no application to America. No country can present a finer array of men of the highest eminence in this art. And such being the case, it is an additional incentive to the student to excel. JOHN GOSS.

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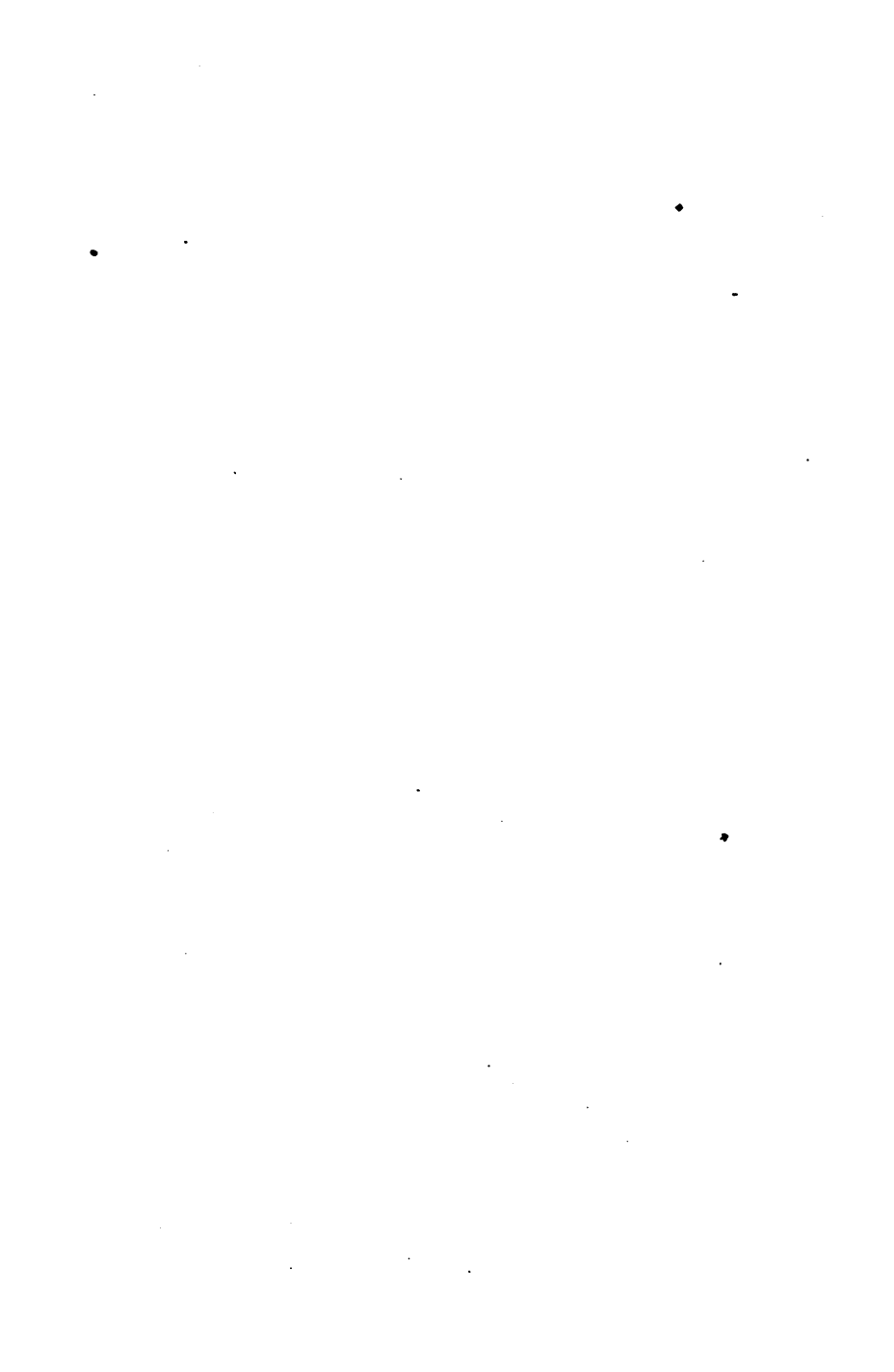


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Cicero, who, with Demosthenes, shares supremacy in the art among the ancients, in various eloquent paraphrases describes the qualities of the true ora-

tor with great clearness and elegance. Thus in one passage he lays it down that "the great object of an orator is to *persuade*;" in another he says that "the tendency of every speech is either to discuss some general question without specifying persons or times, or some point where particular times or persons are specified." Speaking of the same subject in another connection, he tells us that "eloquence is not the product of an art but that art is derived from eloquence," and again, that "it is the art of speaking with judgment, skill, and elegance, and has no determined limits within which it can be confined."

The conditions favorable to its cultivation first claim attention. What state of society is suited to its growth? The answer to this question affords a starting-point to our inquiries. All public speaking necessarily implies a person speaking, an audience to which the speech is addressed, and a subject or theme for discussion. Where one of these elements is wanting, there can be no field for oratory. Wherever, therefore, occasions are presented for the discussion of propositions of public interest, there we must look for excellence in speech.

These opportunities are to be found in what may be termed popular governments, that is, those in which public measures are submitted to the judgment of the people, or assemblies composed of individuals who represent them. Where the government is arbitrary, where it is regulated by the will



of one person who speaks by his interested agents, and whose mandates require immediate acquiescence, as in a military despotism, or where the governing power is confined to a certain class, as, for instance, a hierarchy, like the old Mosaic system, there will be found no field for the display and exercise of oratorical power.

Hence we find the highest development of the art in Greece, that is, the Greece of history, which, of all ancient nations, was most swayed by popular influences, where public opinion had its widest range. Then, too, in Rome during the time of the republic, we find its next highest development, because the nation, though founded on military power, had large and dignified bodies of men, the judges, the senate, and the forum, where questions of public concern were discussed before final action was taken upon them. In England, also, the nation with which we are most allied by language and descent, where the rights of person and property, the necessity of taxation, and questions of peace and war, are debated with freedom, we find it assuming importance; and, lastly, in our own country, which is principally founded on the will of the people, unbounded scope is presented to him who can excel in this great talent.

It should be noted, also, that whenever a country changes from one of these forms of government to another, the effect is immediately seen in its eloquence. For example, as soon as Philip of Macedon

became master of Greece there was a complete subsidence of popular speaking, and Demosthenes, who was the greatest, was the last of Grecian orators. In Rome, too, where prowess in arms was excelled only by the eminence of her public speakers, we see that the light of eloquence went out with the fall of the republic, and Cicero was her last and greatest orator.

It may be laid down, therefore, as an axiom or cardinal principle of the oratorical art that it derives its lifespriug from popular institutions, and by the maintenance of these unimpaired, we can alone preserve its existence.

Next to the question of the conditions suitable to speech-making is its necessity, utility, and importance. As to its necessity that point was touched upon in what has just been said. In representative governments great social and political problems are evolved, first, from the wants of the people and then from the legislative body. In either stage they draw forth animated controversy. Old views give way but slowly and reluctantly to new measures. It is only after repeated attacks, retreating and again attacking with new rhetorical weapons or with the old ones newly sharpened, that conservative views recede before the force of radical ideas. When we consider how slow we are to change our long-settled notions of property, public policy, and private privilege, ideas in which we are trained from infancy, we can form a conception of the im-

portance of presenting new ideas with such clearness, force, and elegance as not to shock too severely long-standing opinions. Again, with what insinuating art must the speaker be able to convince his hearers that he is not a self-seeking demagogue and charlatan, but an advocate of reform for its own sake, and for the sake of the community?

The questions, too, which now present themselves for discussion are even more numerous than at any time in history. While the French Revolution was of a magnitude to awaken the deepest interest among all mankind, and great orators strained the compass of the English language in giving vent to their views in regard thereto, either of condemnation, approval, or apology, and while other great social movements have arisen in previous ages, we still have had mighty revolutions in our day, the eloquence of which will bear no mean comparison with that of any country; while the nicer questions of land tenure, tariffs, corporate law, to say nothing of constitutional construction, are as numerous and as pressing as at any former period of history. All these matters require exposition by skillful public speaking.

The utility and importance of the speaker's art follow from what has been said as to its necessity. The destiny of mankind hinges on the great social problems which, like the French Revolution and the American Civil War, thrust themselves upon the field of political activity. To avoid such great cat-

aclysms, or, what is even of more consequence, to point the proper lessons to be drawn from them, is the object of statesmanship; to teach these lessons to the people, who look for guidance in times of peril to their intellectual leaders, to show them that the storm will soon abate, that sunshine will soon return, that their burdens are not so great as they might have been, to keep them submissive to law and devoted to order, is the orator's duty.

An unlicensed declaimer will exaggerate public misfortunes, aggravate the general distress, and make the people restive and dissatisfied; a calm, well-poised, temperate, insinuating, and logical speaker will calm and soothe the tempest of passion, and shed light where all is darkness.

The difficulties of the art, too, should not be overlooked; it is not an easy thing to become a good, not alone a great, orator. Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke, Webster, Chatham, Fox, Clay, Lincoln, Douglas, Prentiss, and all others who attained high rank as speakers, added to great natural abilities long and laborious practice. Their whole lives were devoted to it, and though some of them may not have looked deep into classical learning, they employed other means which were tantamount to its cultivation.

As he employs language, his words must be well chosen, his grammar correct, his periods smooth and rounded, his style chaste and popular. As he discourses upon almost every question of political or

social importance, he must possess a large fund of general information, drawn from every department of human life. As the rights of person and property frequently hang on the utterances of his lips, he must be well trained in the weight and significance of words, singly and combined. As he is usually elevated to high positions by means of this very talent, he must conduct himself with moderation and discretion. As he is the center of all eyes while speaking, his "form and moving" should be "express and admirable." As he may not always be able to express his thoughts in his own language, he must be conversant with literature to invoke its aid when required. Cicero sums the whole matter up when he says that "in an orator are required the acuteness of a logician, the learning of philosophers, the diction almost of poets, the memory of lawyers, the voice of tragedians, and the action of the best players." Yet it must not be supposed, however, that one cannot be an orator without possessing all these acquirements in perfection. Scarcely any one is so possessed of them. Abraham Lincoln was somewhat defective in grace of person; S. S. Prentiss was lame and had a lisping speech; Burke had a strong brogue; Randolph had a high-keyed, squeaking voice, and like defects could be pointed out in others. These shortcomings are said to have made the speakers attractive, enlisting, possibly, the sympathy or attention of the audience, which is the first thing to be desired and secured. What we

wish to cultivate is something good to talk about, and after that to express it in clear, concise, and comprehensive language. Other excellencies will usually follow, if not in the very highest degree, at least to an extent that will not be very far behind those we do possess.

There is an impression of considerable prevalence that the whole art of speaking must come from nature; that the orator, like the poet, must be born, not made; and many who feel that they do not possess the natural gift, abandon all effort at cultivation and study; while there is a still larger class who, enjoying the endowments of nature, decline all attempts to improve themselves by systematic study. Both of these classes are equally in error. Much the larger part of the orator's success comes from labor, from learning, by very toilsome methods, the canons of the art. Cicero, whose natural talents were of a very high order, admits that he learned his art. S. S. Prentiss spent years in laborious study. Stephen A. Douglas directly charged Abraham Lincoln with making his celebrated Springfield speech after great care and preparation, and Mr. Lincoln admitted such to be the case. Daniel Webster made his reply to Hayne from notes he had prepared long before, when examining the subjects discussed by him for another occasion. And so it will be found that the great efforts of an orator are the result of much previous labor, the amount of which is generally commensurate with

the success of the speech. Cicero, in whose wake it is prudent to follow in all matters of this character, says that "the pen is the most excellent former and director of the tongue; for if reflection and thought easily excel extemporaneous effusions, careful and assiduous practice in composing will excel even those advantages."

Having said this much to explain the true basis of oratory, its necessity, utility, and importance, and the difficulty of excelling in it, we will now devote some attention to its history.

The ancient Greeks are generally conceded to have been the earliest cultivators and acknowledged masters not only of oratory but of all those allied and connected subjects, such as logic, rhetoric, grammar, poetry, history, and philosophy. As we have been taught poetry from their Homer, philosophy from their Plato and Socrates, logic and inductive science from their Aristotle, history from their Herodotus and Thucydides, so we take their Demosthenes as the type of the perfect orator. Cicero, the next highest name in eloquence, constantly extols the great Athenian as the noblest embodiment of the art.

Among this gifted people the conditions for the growth of these high arts were exceptionally favorable. They possessed an inquisitive intellect, constantly reaching out after new theories in the domain of speculative thought. Subtle abstractions, elegant and often too refined distinctions, were their

constant delight. Schools of philosophy, methods of teaching, and forms of government engaged the attention of their greatest minds. They had a keen appreciation of the true, the beautiful, and the good, carried as well into the science of language and speech as into the realms of painting and sculpture. Their martial prowess, too, took on the spirit of their philosophy and their arts. Unlike their Asiatic neighbors, their armies were bodies of enlightened, reasoning and thinking men, each of whom felt the responsibility of battle resting on himself alone; he knew if victorious he would be received with unbounded enthusiasm by his fellow-citizens at home, and if slain, his actions would be held in grateful remembrance, recorded in silent marble, and made the theme of impassioned orators and gifted poets. The contests and rivalries between the surrounding states gave rise to the necessity of large armaments on land and water, and diplomacy was constantly invoked to settle conflicting interests or to form combinations for mutual protection and advantage. Then there were councils, meetings, and elections, where public measures were discussed. There were questions of war, of peace, treaties with foreign nations and with neighboring states, votes of approval and censure, rewards for eminent services or condemnation for unsuccessful enterprises. In the midst of all this activity, there was always a body of dissatisfied complainants, from either honest or, more frequently, from personal motives. The clamors of



these had to be silenced or satisfied. There was, possibly, the fault-finder, whose caviling had to be answered; the grumbling taxpayer, to whom the necessity of the measures had to be explained; the jealous aspirant, whose ambition had to be curbed; and last, but not least, the corrupt emissary, whose plans had to be foiled.

Amid scenes so active and movements so important, great names in every department of intellectual pre-eminence shone out with great splendor; in what the Greeks did well they have never been surpassed. It is only her orators, however, with which we are now concerned. Of these there was a long and brilliant array. Most of their names, however, are forgotten, save by the classical student, with the exception of the greatest, Demosthenes. His name has become the synonym of eloquence itself. For over two thousand years it has been foremost on men's lips when speaking of oratory. It is fair to presume that his fame has a solid foundation. He was born B. C. 385, and died in exile on the Island of Calauria, B. C. 323. His early education was efficient. He attended school at Athens under eminent teachers. His parents having died, he was left in the charge of guardians, whom he had to prosecute and bring to account for mismanagement of his estate. He did so with success, conducting the proceedings himself, though only twenty years of age. Against one of his guardians he recovered a judgment for ten thousand dollars.

He devoted himself to law and politics. Eloquence was then, as now, necessary to success in these pursuits. Many stories are told of the difficulties in voice and manner that he had to overcome. The former was lisping, like our Prentiss, and the latter was ungainly, possibly like Lincoln. Like all great speakers, he was not created one full-blown, but had to carve his way to success with patience, study, and practice. He soon became engaged in lawsuits of a public and private nature, and gradually won a distinguished name. He entered the Athenian Senate at the age of thirty, and took a prominent part in its deliberations.

During the period in which he flourished, the kingdom of Macedonia, to the north of Greece, was ruled by an ambitious, crafty, and able military king named Phillip. He was the father of Alexander the Great. Phillip began to cast longing eyes toward Greece, and on one pretext or another began intermeddling in its affairs. Demosthenes soon perceived what the final result must be, the destruction of Hellenic freedom. Others did not see it as he did. Some saw what was coming, but did not possess sufficient patriotism to try to avoid the impending doom; some seemed to hasten rather than retard it. His first great political speeches were delivered against the designs of this man, Phillip. They were three in number. They were delivered with so much force, abounded in such patriotic sentiments, were inspired with so much cour-

age, and pointed with such unerring aim, that from that day to this a speech which abounds in strong invective is termed a Phillipic, in recognition of Demosthenes' power. The single example has given a name to a class. No higher tribute could be paid to his genius. His counsels finally prevailed, and he undertook an expedition to Thebes and succeeded in enlisting that city with his own to send an army against Phillip and Alexander. The forces met at Chæronea, 338 B. C. The Greeks were defeated, and Grecian freedom was at an end. Notwithstanding this defeat, Demosthenes still held the confidence of the Athenians. He was selected to deliver the funeral oration on those who had been slain.

Soon after this battle one of his admirers, named Ctesiphon, proposed in the Senate that a golden crown be presented to him in the temple of Dionysius, in consideration of his distinguished services to the state. His enemies, the leader of whom was another great orator, named Æschines, retaliated by having the mover of this proposition indicted. Demosthenes was retained for the defense. The contest, as can be imagined, could not but involve his whole policy in resisting the machinations of Phillip, ending in disaster, as contrasted with that of the opponents of that policy, which might have had a different result. The trial did not take place for six or eight years after filing the indictment. His speech delivered on that occasion is known as

the Oration on the Crown. It is considered by critics as a masterpiece of eloquence. It is valuable as a linguistic performance, and as teaching a lesson too frequently lost sight of, and that is, that failure does not necessarily mean disgrace. It was upon this theory that Æschines hoped to succeed, and it is fortunate for mankind that he met an adversary who not only could surpass him in the mere power of speech, but in the higher and nobler sphere of moral excellence. So completely did Demosthenes answer his accuser, hurling back his taunts with such withering sarcasm, showing up his sophistries with such matchless skill, exposing his insincerity with so much ingenuity, that Æschines, failing to secure a one-fifth vote in favor of his bill, was banished from Athens, to which he never returned.

This speech is greatly admired. It can be appreciated only in the original Greek, and hence it is popularly but little known. We must be content to take what authorities say of it. It should not be imagined that other equally great, perhaps greater, speeches have not been made. It is enough to know that the reputation of the speaker has never waned after more than twenty centuries have passed away. It is simply, as all great speeches should be, great, elevating, ennobling thoughts expressed in clear, pure, forcible, strong language. There is no effort at humor, no straining after effect, no heaping up of ornament. He possessed the judgment to see the weak points of his adversary, the

skill to plant his batteries in commanding positions, and the fulminating power to use his missiles with destructive effect. He not only answered his antagonist, he demolished him. He did not leave him a road by which to retreat. The contest will suggest the controversy between Daniel Webster and Robert Y. Hayne. They have many points of semblance. We need not attempt here to draw any comparison, as the student, from reading the debate, can best judge for himself. We leave him to do so. All that the Webster-Hayne debate was the Grecian contest was, and something more. Demosthenes reached the climax of eloquence when, in replying to the taunts of Æschines in regard to the final failure of the efforts of the former to successfully defend Grecian liberty, he said: "If you condemn Ctesiphon, and thereby decree that I did not administer your government in the best possible manner it will appear that all your calamities are due to yourselves and not to the cruel mandate of fortune. But it is not possible, it is not possible, O men of Athens, that you were wrong in following my counsels when you risked your lives and fortunes for the sake of freedom and safety. No! by the shades of our ancestors, who first met danger at Marathon. No! by those who fought in battle array at Plataea. No! by those who braved death at the naval victory of Salamis, and at Artemisium; by the many more brave men who lie entombed in monuments erected by their grateful country, all

of whom the city has buried, deeming all alike worthy of never-fading renown, not alone those who survived, but those who perished on the field of glory."

An American orator, however, on one occasion at least, reached the Demosthenian heights of eloquence in a speech delivered at the dedication of the Military Cemetery on the battlefield of Gettysburg. In elevation of sentiment, energy of expression, compactness and fitness of language, Lincoln's short address on that occasion has a marked similarity to the style of Demosthenes. It is given hereafter. The student will perceive a strong resemblance to the passage from Demosthenes just given. As Mr. Lincoln was not a classical scholar, the likeness must be deemed accidental.

Demosthenes, like most of the eminent men of those stormy periods, was an object of envy to many of his countrymen. At one time he was banished, but in a few years he was recalled amid great rejoicing. He was compelled to fly a second time, and rather than submit to capture by his enemies, he put an end to his own life. Centuries of study and criticism have not lessened his reputation as a statesman or as an orator. As both he stands pre-eminent, and will as long as men retain any respect for devotion to duty and self-sacrificing patriotism.

Although the greatest he was by no means the only Grecian orator. His light was so resplendent,

however, that the lesser ones seem obscure. It is one of the peculiarities of eloquence that unless it is of the very highest order, a successful rival has ample opportunity to surpass it, and drive it completely out of remembrance.

The doctrine of the survival of the fittest nowhere finds better illustration than in this art. If Demosthenes had made an inferior speech to that of Æschines, the latter's effort would be the model to be studied instead of that of the former. Hayne's speech would have been the object of untold admiration had it not elicited Webster's reply. It did, in fact, produce a very great sensation, so much so that one of his friends moved an adjournment of the Senate, in order that its effect might not be disturbed by other business.

This point is worthy of careful attention. A reply to a previous speech should be exceptionally good, else it will injure rather than subserve the cause it is intended to promote. If not, the first effort and the first speaker will receive increased applause. It will not do, either, to be simply good. It must surpass the other to such a degree that it will leave no room for comparison. The triumph should be complete. The contest should not result in a drawn battle. The victory in that event is then mostly on the side of your opponent. Having the advantage of sleeping on your adversary's speech, your attempt at a reply raises a presumption that your side is stronger than his and it must

be so presented, not in an equivocal manner, but with completeness and skill.

The nation which ranks next to Greece in the eloquence of her orators is Rome. Her success, however, came long after that of Greece. When Demosthenes was rousing his countrymen against the machinations of Phillip, Rome was measuring swords with the neighboring nations in her march to universal empire. It was nearly two hundred years before her oratory attained a high degree of perfection.

Her greatest orator was Marcus Tullius Cicero, who shares with Demosthenes the supremacy of the ancient world in this noble art. No other Roman orator is ever presented to the student's consideration, though there were many others of great eminence and celebrity. Hortensius, Crassus, and Antonius are names familiar to students of that period. Julius Cæsar also had high claims to oratorical distinction. If, however, we have a fair comprehension of what Cicero wrote and said in his peculiar province, we can leave all the others of his time without notice.

The great orator and philosopher, for he was preeminently both, was born at Arpinum, a Latin city, the inhabitants of which enjoyed the rights of Roman citizenship. Marius, the great general, was also a native of this town. The father of Cicero was desirous of giving him and his brother Quintus every advantage of education to enable them to at-



tain high positions in the Roman commonwealth. He placed them, therefore, under the instruction of a distinguished teacher at Rome.

He soon showed unmistakable signs of oratorical talent, and in two speeches which he delivered at about the age of twenty-six, he won general applause. Ambitious to reach the highest state of perfection possible in his now adopted studies, he went to Athens, where, as he tells us himself, no subjects engaged profounder study and investigation. Here he remained two years and returned again to Rome. He immediately showed the result of his stay at Athens in the increased power and skill of his eloquence. He was employed in a variety of private and public trials and soon became an aspirant for official station. He was chosen ædile, then prætor, and finally consul, the highest political position at that time at Rome.

Immediately after his elevation to the consulship an opportunity was presented to him for the fullest display of his powers. Rome at that time had become a hotbed for all kinds of political corruption, unlawful ambition, and, to use his own expression, "unbridled audacity." To disperse this seething mass and prevent its endangering the republic was his first duty in his high office.

Lucius Sergius Catiline was a descendant of a patrician family of some distinction, but his own fortunes had reached a very low ebb. He had been a strong supporter and ready instrument of Sylla,

who at one time held sway at Rome. He united to depraved tastes, cruel and licentious instincts, badness, cunning and ferocity.

Scarcely was Cicero settled in power when Catiline, drawing around him men of similar tastes and like fortunes to himself, formed a conspiracy to overthrow the government, and plant himself and his followers on the ruins. Cicero detected the plot and boldly exposed the whole matter in the Roman Senate in the presence of the conspirator himself. His plan was not to bring the culprit to trial in Rome, where he could summon his adherents and foil the regular channels of the law by intimidation, bribery for violence, but to drive him and his adherents from the city and then follow and destroy them. He thus could gain a splendid opportunity to display his great powers of oratory, rid the city of the enemy, and win the additional reputation of defeating him in regular warfare. The plan was crowned with success in each particular. Having abundant evidence of the conspiracy, of which he himself was to be one of the first victims, he convened the Senate at an early hour. Rising from his seat, he poured forth on Catiline a torrent of well-directed invective, charging him with the crime. No one dared come to the defense. The latter withdrew from Rome, and his few followers were soon dispersed.

The orations against Catiline are among Cicero's most celebrated efforts. They are bold, abrupt,

pointed, and crushing, and are the models universally studied in our schools. Their great aim was to hold up Catiline as an object of hatred and disdain. Many others, however, can be read with much greater profit. There is no close chain of reasoning leading through a maze of disputed facts to clear and logical deductions. For this quality we must look to his other numerous speeches.

Then, as now, there were many conflicting interests in the State, and each had its bold and ready leader. Rome at this period was undergoing one of those great transformations that occur at least once in every organized government. She was about to change forever those institutions under which she had existed for seven hundred years. She was no longer able to withstand the strain to which it was being continually subjected by the clashing forces.

The Senate, the aristocracy, the knights, the patrician order, wedded to opulence, to power, not to say arrogance and tyranny, leaned for support on Cneius Pompey. The tribe of demagogues, of abandoned spendthrifts, needy politicians, those to whom virtue meant shame, and good government oblivion, were led by an abandoned but bold and profligate demagogue named Clodius. The party of aspiring young politicians, men of good talents but loose habits, attracted rather by brilliant adventure than by staid respectability, followed the fortunes of Julius Cæsar.

To the second of these parties Cicero was an ob-

ject of undisguised hatred. The party of Pompey was his nearest choice, but the rising popularity of Cæsar made it apparent that a clash must soon come between those great leaders, and Cicero would be called upon to make a final decision as to which he would lend the power of his name. Meanwhile, the party of Clodius gained strength, and with its strength increased audacity and violence. Cicero was the grand object for destruction. Cæsar had been assigned to Gaul and Pompey had retired to one of his suburban villas, and thus the great orator was left to the mercy of the Roman mob, headed by Clodius. The natural result followed. The Senate and the better class of citizens being deterred by the populace, the demagogue procured a decree banishing Cicero from Rome and consigning his property to destruction. The decree was ruthlessly carried out, and he who a few years before had won the title of Second Founder of Rome, was an outcast from her limits. The popular tumult, however, soon subsided; the excesses of the demagogue soon wasted his strength. The friends of Cicero began to take courage, and a general uprising to quell the tumult raised by Clodius was the result. Even Pompey felt called upon to place his hand against the anarchist.

Clodius himself was slain by a friend of Cicero named Milo, and a decree was passed recalling the eloquent patriot from exile, and ordering his houses to be rebuilt at the public expense. His return

was a triumph, and his welcome atoned to some extent for the bitterness of his exile.

But though Clodius was dead and Cicero returned, the evils of the republic were none the less pressing and dangerous. For a few years he devoted his time to the defense of his clients and the interests of the republic. He was offered and accepted the government of Cilicia, which included several other provinces, and thus his fortunes began to mend. But the improvement was of short life. Domestic and other troubles began to open a breach between Cæsar and Pompey. It gradually began to widen, until a resort to arms seemed to be mutually agreed upon. No matter which triumphed, the death of the republic was the inevitable result, and this event meant the political if not the physical death of Cicero.

He hesitated, advanced and retreated again and again, from one resolution to another, first coquetting with one party and then with the other. It is at this point that his career is most open to adverse criticism. It is easy to see now what was the best course for him to pursue, namely, to keep aloof from the conflict altogether, but it was not so easy to see or to judge then. We have not to go far for an explanation of his conduct. Cicero was a man of words and not of deeds. While he thought, the other parties to the great drama acted. While neither Cæsar, Pompey, Octavius, nor Antony, with all their talents, could cope with him in the Senate or

in the Forum, in promptness of action, quick discernment, followed by immediate resolution, they each surpassed him. At length he cast his lot with Pompey. Cæsar triumphed and the republic was at an end. Pompey fled to Egypt, where he was ignominiously assassinated, and his great rival was left master of Rome and of the world.

Cicero was again irresolute whether to follow the party of Pompey in its misfortunes or to accept the favor of Cæsar, who more than once endeavored to reconcile and conciliate him. He refused to do either. He remained near Rome, and during Cæsar's absence in Spain showed more and more his distaste for the latter's actions. Marc Antony now began to appear on the scene. He was a devoted follower of Cæsar and very distasteful to Cicero. The latter remained, however, on good terms with Cæsar after the death of Pompey. He took but little part in public affairs, only speaking once to return thanks for the return of his friend Marcellus.

The assassination of Cæsar threw everything into worse commotion than ever. Cicero, though an intimate friend of Brutus, was not informed of the plot. He immediately foresaw, however, that the bloody deed would not mend matters so far as the restoration of the republic was concerned. It threw the government into the hands of several untried and untrained men, instead of one possessed of skill and experience. Our orator cast a suspicious eye on Marc Antony, and denounced him in a series

of heated addresses. These are known as his Philipics, taking that name from the efforts of Demosthenes against Phillip of Macedon. Antony, thereupon, like Clodius, cherished feelings of deep revenge, and, as in the case of Clodius, the tide of events soon brought the cherished opportunity to satisfy it to its utmost extent.

Octavius, who afterwards became Augustus, had been a protégé of Cicero's, and for a time he seemed to be a devoted admirer of the great orator. The necessities of the times, however, brought him in close political relations with Antony. The latter placed himself forward as the avenger of Cæsar. With great skill and eloquence he aroused the passions of the Roman populace, who cried loud for the blood of Cæsar's assassins. The forces of Antony and Octavius met those of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi and overcame them. This last act formed the close of the drama begun on the Ides of March. Antony and Octavius had but to agree upon the fate of the then known world and it was determined. Octavius was cold, dissembling, and politic; Antony, passionate, blunt, and stolid. When the question of dividing the spoils of conquest came up between them, Octavius asked for power, Antony for revenge. Cicero was turned over to Antony. The rest is soon told. He was soon made aware of his fate, and the soldiers of Antony were not long in finding their victim, and executing the order of their master in slaying the great orator.

We have given the public lives of both Demosthenes and Cicero for the purpose of showing the scenes in which they lived, that their oratory might the better be judged. Several of the best of Cicero's orations were, in fact, never delivered at all; notably those against Verres, and that in favor of Milo. Their careers show that, like all distinguished excellencies, envy awaits him who possesses the great talent. The lesson should not be forgotten.

The merely political career of Cicero is open to much criticism. The weak points were shown as we described the events of his life; it is his literary character that most concerns the student. In the province of philosophy he ranks high; in the domain of oratory he is supreme. Great, very great speeches have been made by orators since his time; we have not to go far to find them; still his position cannot be shaken. His orations present a systematic, analytical treatment of the subject under his discussion, adorned with a grace of rhetoric polish of diction, and withal an energy of expression, that have never been surpassed. His treatises on the art, such as "The Orator," "Brutus, or the History of Famous Orators," and "De Oratore," not to mention a few others, are eloquence itself. His speeches are not like those of many speakers, a conglomeration of flowery language, or high-piled masses of linguistic garniture, but bright, elegant, well-trimmed oratorical gardens, with smooth walks and babbling fountains, where there is beauty, fresh-



ness, order, life. Each can be read with profit, and his oratorical treatises should form the basis of every effort to teach the art. His scheme is quite simple. Cicero's orator should begin at the morning of life, and learn every branch of kindred science, such as philosophy, logic, grammar, rhetoric, law, morals; these, with the proper gift of expression, form his model.

What was so in his day is so in ours. Burke, Webster, Clay, come up to the Ciceronian standard. The same may be said of Lincoln and Douglas. Great men all; not all formed on precisely the same plan, nor having the same advantages, some learning in our colleges, others in the stern warfare of life, but each reaching the same plane, where only sound learning, close reasoning, great experience in public life, profound knowledge of human nature, can long hold high position.

## CHAPTER II.

THE EDUCATION OF THE ORATOR.—HIS CHARACTER AS AFFECTING HIS ELOQUENCE.—HIS MOTIVES.—HIS SINCERITY.

THE preceding chapter was devoted to the consideration of oratory in general, the conditions adapted to its cultivation, its necessity, utility, and importance, with a brief account of two of its most noted exemplars. We shall now proceed to discuss some of the principles of the art itself.

The first thing to be determined is the education of the orator. What studies must he pursue, what knowledge must he possess, what must be his leading motives to insure the success of his efforts?

Quintilian, one of the greatest authorities upon the subject, held that the preparation and education of the public speaker should commence at his earliest moments, almost at his birth, and that the perfect orator should also be a perfect man. Theoretically, this may be true; practically, it is impossible. As stated in the opening chapter, there must be something born in the man, in addition to his education and training, to make him a successful advocate, but in what this innate power consists, without which it is difficult to attain distinction, and what should be the precise discipline, without

which it is also hard to rise to eminence in the art, it is not easy to tell. Both matters open a very wide field for inquiry. All the great orators we have mentioned possessed good natural powers of mind, fair graces of person, excellent education, and great experience. But they acquired their education in various ways, or, rather, their education was of very different kinds. Chatham, Burke, Fox, Webster, Prentiss, and Randolph were college educated men, some of them showing their eloquence very conspicuously in their school life. Lincoln, Douglas, Patrick Henry, and Benton had no such advantages, but learned their art from actual intercourse with men, supplying their defects by increased powers of observation, and we might say absorption, from those with whom they came in contact.

But while special talents are necessary, is special education necessary to the speaker? We think it is; that is, there must be certain studies and exercises more adapted to his calling than others. Yet it is difficult to accept the theory of Quintilian as to the perfectibility of the orator. In educational matters it would be hard to lay down any exact formula, while in that of morals the field is so broad that we never could know what moral endowments it would be necessary to possess before we could be satisfied that the oratorical model was complete.

If we confine our inquiries to general terms, and

not seek too diligently for particular qualifications, we can proceed without much hesitation.

To begin, therefore, the successful orator must be well educated, if not in learned seminaries, under eminent teachers, then in private study, or general observation; he must possess a good memory, be informed as to standard literature and well grounded in civil and political history, and be conversant with the laws of his own and other countries. These requirements are independent of the power of expression, to be noticed hereafter.

We cannot better illustrate the education of the orator than by giving the reader the accounts that two of our greatest orators gave of each other. They are valuable as throwing light upon the subject we are discussing, and are good examples of the manner in which a public speaker may interest his hearers by a slight detour when he feels that they may become weary at listening to an argumentative discussion without an opportunity of relieving the monotony of expounding intricate political problems.

Mr. Douglas, in his opening speech in the joint debate between himself and Mr. Lincoln at Ottawa, August 21, 1858, said :—

“In the remarks I have made on this platform, and the position of Mr. Lincoln upon it, I mean nothing personally disrespectful or unkind to that gentleman. I have known him for nearly twenty-five years. There were many points of sympathy between us when we

first got acquainted. We were both comparatively boys, and both struggling with poverty in a strange land. I was a schoolteacher in the town of Winchester and he a flourishing grocery keeper in the town of Salem. He was more successful in his occupation than I in mine, and hence more fortunate in this world's goods. Lincoln is one of these peculiar men who perform with admirable skill everything which they undertake. I made as good a school-teacher as I could, and when a cabinet-maker I made a good bedstead and tables, although my old boss said I succeeded better at bureaus and secretaries than anything else; but I believe that Lincoln was always more successful in business than I, for his business enabled him to get into the Legislature. I met him there, however, and had a sympathy with him, because of the uphill struggle we both had in life. He was then just as good at telling an anecdote as now. He could beat any of the boys wrestling or running a foot-race, in pitching quoits, or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all of the town together, and the dignity and impartiality with which he presided at a horse-race or a fist fight excited the admiration and won the praise of everybody that was present and participated. I sympathized with him because he was struggling with difficulties and so was I."

On the other hand, Mr. Lincoln had this to say of himself and Mr. Douglas:—

"The judge is woefully at fault about his early friend Lincoln being a grocery keeper. I don't know as it would be a great sin if I had been; but he is mistaken. Lincoln never kept a grocery anywhere in the world.

It is true that Lincoln did work the latter part of one winter in a little still house up at the head of a hollow. . . . There is another disadvantage under which we labor, and to which I will ask your attention. It arises out of the relative positions of the two persons who stand before the State as candidates for the Senate. Senator Douglas is of world-wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party for years past have been looking upon him as certainly at no distant day to be the President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post offices, land offices, marshalships and cabinet appointments, chargeships and foreign missions bursting and sprouting out in wonderful exuberance, ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands. And as they have been gazing upon this attractive picture so long, they cannot, in the little distraction that has taken place in the party, bring themselves to give up the charming hope; but with the greediest anxiety they rush about him, sustain him, and give him marches, triumphal entries, and receptions beyond what even in the days of his highest prosperity they could have brought about in his favor. On the contrary, nobody has expected me to be President. In my poor, lean, lank face, nobody has ever seen that any cabbages were sprouting out."

From these extracts we can learn out of the mouths of these advocates themselves that defects of early opportunity as in the case of Douglas, and a want of personal grace in that of Lincoln, were more than counterbalanced by keen logic in the latter and strong personal magnetism and energy

of thought and expression in the former. So that the student need have no fear that because he is not a perfect-man, mentally, morally, or physically, which, in fact, as we are constituted, is an almost impossible combination, he may not become an eminent orator, and even if he fail to become a great speaker, he can acquire the power to address a jury, a court, or a public meeting with ease and effect.

Recurring to the question of the speaker's education, we have laid it down that he should be well grounded in all those studies which pertain to the ordinary affairs of life and the conduct of civil government. Here again we come in contact with theoretical and practical oratory. In theory, the orator, as the poet, should have some knowledge of everything. But in turn this broad requirement should be clearly understood. It is hardly to be expected that he should understand mathematics like a Newton, astronomy like a Herschel, natural science like an Agassiz, or civil government like a Hamilton. It is sufficient for him to have correct general notions of these subjects, so as to be able to detect manifest crudities and absurdities that may crop out in an opponent who essays to discourse about or allude to them. For example, he need not be able to demonstrate the Nebular Hypothesis, but it might be of service to him to know what is meant by that term so as to explain it whenever brought to the surface in a forensic controversy. So, too, in government, while he may not be presumed to

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have that deep insight into public policy or the formation of civil communities as a Jefferson or a Hamilton, yet it is highly important that he should understand and explain, if necessary, what the theories of those great statesmen were on that subject. Again, but few of us could *demonstrate* the *law* of gravitation, though we are all conversant with the *fact*, but it should be a part of our education to know it and to explain it if required.

Similar views were entertained by Cicero; in fact, they are self-evident to everyone, but we will give his language so that the student can at the same time have the benefit of his apt illustrations. He says: "Indeed, in my opinion, everything falls within the profession of an orator that affects the interests of his countrymen, the manners of mankind, whatever regards the habits of life, the conduct of government, civil society, love of the public, nature, morals. At least, though he is not obliged professedly to discuss, like a philosopher, these subjects, yet he ought to know how to interweave them dexterously while pleading at the bar; he ought to speak of these things as they did who founded laws, institutions, and states, with simplicity, with perspicuity, without long-continued disputation, without barren controversies about words."

Take, for example, the subject of history. This he should understand not merely as to dates, but events. What brought them about? Who controlled them? What lessons does an important



event teach? Thus the first thing to know is what actually did take place. This, though not the most important part of our knowledge of history, it is well to understand. There can be no controversy that there were such events in history as the French Revolution, the American Revolutionary War, or the American Civil War, nor as to the leading features of, or the principal characters in, those important epochs. By far the harder part of his task is to have the correct order of events, and particularly their causes and effects. Here he is performing the work of the philosopher, finding the true cause of things as they occur, and from this formulating safe maxims for the future. For instance, let the student ask himself, What was the cause of the American Civil War, the French Revolution, or the American Revolutionary War? This will immediately impose upon him the duty of examining every fact of those periods with care and attention. The history of a matter is frequently the very point in dispute, and the person who is the best informed upon the question will appear to the greatest advantage in an address or discussion relative to it. The cause of events is of very great importance to the orator, for two reasons: First, to enable him to treat correctly of such as are past; and second, to draw proper comparisons with matters present and to come. For instance, in the Webster-Hayne debate, Mr. Hayne likened the treatment of the West by the people of the East to

that of the colonies by Great Britain. Mr. Webster took up the question and endeavored to show that the comparison was very far-fetched and greatly overdrawn.

In dealing with intricate questions, the first thing an orator is apt to do, and it is a very proper thing to be done, is to indulge in comparisons of this character, because experience is the great and very often the only guide men have, either in their public or private affairs. How important it is, then, that he who in fact puts himself forward as an adviser, as a counselor, should understand past events with exactness, not loosely and disjointedly. As in nature, so in history and in morals, no two events are identical in all their bearings and consequences, so that if an orator attempts to compare one with another, an antecedent with a subsequent one, he must be sure he is correct before he draws his comparison, else a wily opponent will retort on him with unpleasant effect.

A good illustration of this is to be found in the contest between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. The latter asked the question in one of his speeches, "Why cannot the institution of slavery, or, rather, why cannot the nation, part slave and part free, continue as our fathers made it forever?" This raised the issue, How did our fathers make it? The answer to this was simply a historical one, a question of fact. Lincoln took it up, and in a very ingenuous manner endeavored to

show that they made the government with a view to the abolition or extinction of slavery rather than to its preservation.

Examples might be multiplied. Thus, to the English statesmen who controlled British politics during the American Revolutionary War, the Americans were simply rebels from a kind, paternal government, rebelling without just cause; to us they are patriots, with the strongest grounds for their rebellion. This very question was raised in the British Parliament. A speaker on the part of the government urged that the people of the United States, being British colonists, "planted by the maternal care, nourished by the indulgence, and protected by the arms of England, would not grudge their mite to relieve the mother country from the heavy burden under which she groaned." To this Colonel Barré replied: "They planted by your care? Your oppression planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny, and grew by their neglect of them. So soon as you begun to care for them, you showed your care by sending persons to spy out their liberties, misrepresent their character, prey upon them, and eat out their substance."

The value of a correct knowledge of history to the student is, therefore, very important. By this we do not mean a knowledge simply of events, such as the dates of battles, the contentions of ambitious leaders, the rivalries of great nations, the campaigns of great generals and commanders.

These are valuable in themselves, but the principal thing to be sought after is the history of social, political, and moral forces. It is with these the orator has principally to deal. While the identity of many nations has been lost, what of their arts, their manners, their literature, their economy? From these the student can draw endless lessons and comparisons that may be interwoven into the most abstract discussions to give them life and beauty.

For example, we have but little use now for many of the battles that were fought by the petty states of Greece. But there is a strong interest still attaching to the defense of the Pass of Thermopylæ, because of the moral grandeur of Leonidas and his companions. The same might be said of Marathon and the naval battle of Salamis, where the Grecian fleet, though much smaller in number, overcame that of the Persians. A few events like these are remembered out of the innumerable conflicts in which the people of the ancient world were engaged, either in their domestic history or in their careers of conquest. In those that are not forgotten it is the moral quality that gives them significance. In philosophy, art, and literature, we find even better illustrations of this quality. Thus, Socrates is still a living character in the domain of morals and ethical philosophy, and the accounts we have of him in the writings of Xenophon and Plato are the models we study at school. Plato and Aristotle have lost none of their charm for successive ages.

Homer is still Homer, and the same may be said of Demosthenes, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. They were pioneers in regions of thought that still engage the understanding of men. These authors should be known, if possible, not with that degree of accuracy that would be required of a teacher, but generally; the student should have a good conception of their characters. So in art. Much of it has perished, but enough of it remains to show what manner of men there was in those days. From the graceful column we can form an idea of the beautiful temple to which it belonged. We can feel that Demosthenes spoke to an audience of artists, of architects and builders, men accustomed to forms of beauty. These things afford not only a store of knowledge which it is well to have at hand, but they serve frequently to inspire eloquence, the very thing we are seeking. The orator is often called upon to draw comparisons, admonish against errors in life, in habits, against political corruption. Where can he point but to history? He draws his inspiration from the past. True principles of conduct, public or private, were the same then as now. The only difficulty lay in discovering them and applying them when found.

There are many lessons to be found in Roman history. From Rome we have much of our civil law, to say nothing of her master spirits in war, in literature, in discovery, in conquest, in philosophy; many of her great battles, civil commotions, in-

trigues, and intestine troubles, we can and do forget. But the grand outlines and the great characters we should remember. Her religion, for instance, has entirely passed away. We still have her Coliseum, her Virgil, her Horace, her Cæsar, her Cato, her Cicero, her Brutus. What was poetry and eloquence then is poetry and eloquence to-day. Then there is Egypt with her pyramids, Persia and Media, and last but not least, Palestine, each with its offering to inspire good and wholesome eloquence. It is in this sense that Cicero describes history as "the witness of past ages, the light of truth, the life of memory, the guide of life, and the messenger of antiquity."

It is not the history of the ancients alone that should claim attention; that of more recent times is full of interest. All our modern governments are products of mediæval ages. There was a long formative period between the disintegration of the Roman Empire and our present leading nations; it is one that deserves special study. Our own country above all has an interesting page for the student. Her form of government is peculiar and demands the greatest attention. Nothing similar to it has ever been tried. Our peculiar relations to Great Britain at the time of the Revolutionary War, our history from that time to this, the unhappy Civil War and the causes that led to it, are matters of much more importance and interest than many things usually given to the student in the course of

his education. From the debates between Randolph, Clay and Calhoun on the tariff, Webster and Hayne on the domestic relations of the States, and Lincoln and Douglas on the status of the negro. discussions which for keenness of logic, elevation of sentiment, fertility of expression, and all the graces of elocution, will compare with any efforts in ancient or modern times—from these contests the American student will readily perceive that no more interesting themes for the display of his art can be found than in his own country.

A few words may be said as to the study of the Latin and Greek languages. Is a knowledge of them necessary to the orator? Much argument may be advanced on both side of the question. One thing we know, and that is, they contain the very best models of the art. The time and labor it requires to obtain a knowledge of them cannot but be of great advantage to the student. It demands great care to acquire it, and it affords excellent practice to be able to translate them into good English. Nothing can be more beneficial, and hence their study must be commended. Orators there have been who knew but little of the ancient classics, but they are exceptions. There are also other fine specimens which may be adopted in their place. If time will permit, however, the classics should be studied; if not, the next best thing should be done, and that is to spend much time in careful composition.

Among the things which should enter into and form a part of the education of the orator no subject is of greater importance than literature. We will have much to say of this under the head of language. In its literature a nation lives and transmits its image from one generation to another. In it is embodied the motives, the passions, the inspirations, the feelings, the hopes, the lights and shades of mankind in their progress through the ages. What we know of Greece and Rome we obtain from their literature.

The Bible stands pre-eminent as a book to be carefully studied. Aside from its theological value, it has a wealth of rhetorical lore that enables one to illustrate every phase of life, every movement of the intellect, every aspiration of the soul. No work, either, is generally so well known. As we listen to its teachings from our childhood, we learn by heart its great lessons, and the illustrations of allegory, metaphor, and parable, by which those lessons are taught. A noted example of its value as an adjunct to public speaking is found in the debate between Lincoln and Douglas. In the leading speech of the former, he quoted that portion of Sacred Writ which says that a house divided against itself cannot stand (Mark 3 : 25). The orator alluded to the condition of the United States, divided into half slave and half free States. The advantage of the quotation consisted in its being well known and readily understood by those to whom it was ad-



dressed, and it presented the idea of the orator in less words than it would have taken to express it in his own language. Another example will be found in a speech of Thomas Erskine in the celebrated case of *Markham vs. Fawcett*, an action for damages for the seduction of the plaintiff's wife by defendant. The seducer was the friend of the plaintiff, and as such had been a welcome guest to the house which he had dishonored. The orator, after endeavoring in eloquent terms to show the enormity of the offense on account of its being perpetrated by a friend instead of an enemy or a stranger, quoted with fine effect the scriptural language, as follows :—

“It is not an enemy that hath done me this dishonor, for then I could have borne it. Neither was it mine adversary that did magnify himself against me; for then, peradventure, I would have hid myself from him. But it was *thou*, even thou, my companion, my guide, mine own familiar friend.” Ps. 55:12, 13.

We might multiply examples to the same effect. Too frequent allusions to Scripture, of course, should not be made; one reason of which is that the sacred volume is daily expounded by the ministers of religion, and a too steady reference to its great texts would transform a speech into a sermon, two classes of oratory which are quite distinct.

Next to the Bible in range of thought, general adaptability to the expression of the various and varying interests and passions of mankind, are the

works of Shakespeare. No writer, ancient or modern, has shown such a complete mastery of human thought and feeling. He has sounded every phase of life from the king who lays his head on a sleepless pillow to the slumbering sea-boy on the rude, tempestuous surge. There is no thought either of vaulting ambition, far-seeing statecraft, vanished hopes, disappointed desires, impassioned love, down to the vaporings of the harlequin, which do not receive the touch of his master hand. The statesman, lover, lawyer, poet, philosopher, and orator can take counsel from his luminous pages. As the last has occasion probably more than any of the others to give a thought a good, appropriate dressing, he can nowhere find a better pattern than in Shakespeare, and in the multitudinous occasions that arise for just this necessity he will never turn to him in vain. A great many examples might be given where quotations from Shakespeare have been used with effect, and others might be cited where they proved disastrous. For instance, in the debate between Daniel Webster and Robert Hayne, hereafter given, the latter made an allusion to Shakespeare which the former took up and used to great advantage.

It is not altogether for the purpose of quotation however, that this and other great literary works are needed. As a general thing, it is much better for the speaker to mould his own thoughts in his own language. The appropriate sphere of a knowl-

edge of literature in its highest forms in the make-up of an orator is to enlarge his vocabulary and extend his range of thought, and in addition to be able to retort on an adversary when he makes unhappy allusions. The works of all our great poets, dramatists, and novelists, no less than Shakespeare, should be studied for the same purpose. They are the language makers of the race, as well as the photographers of the ages in which they lived.

To the study of history and literature should be added, as above intimated, that of every department of knowledge, keeping in view, of course, that there are some subjects more closely related to the speaker's vocation than others. To the lawyer, a knowledge of jurisprudence is particularly essential, that is, jurisprudence in its higher and broader forms, beyond mere citations and decisions. The debate between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas turned very largely upon a decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. The Supreme Court decided that negroes could not be prohibited by Congress from being taken as slaves into United States territory. Judge Douglas declared he was willing to bow to that decision. Mr. Lincoln declared he was willing to accept it as conclusive in the trial of one case, but would not submit to it as a rule of political action. Great skill and ingenuity are therefore displayed by these orators over the proposition: How far is a person bound in his political action by a decision of the

Supreme Court? Were the contestants not well grounded in civil law and court decisions, the discussion would have been a mass of miserable jargon, but being conducted by men of acknowledged ability, it presents one of the most beneficial studies in which a young orator can engage.

Next to the education of the orator, attention should be paid to his character. When a person arises to address an audience, the first question uppermost in men's minds is, "Who is he?" If he be a man of wide reputation, great talent as a speaker, steady in his political or religious convictions, earnest in his efforts, incorruptible and uncorrupted, he will obtain an attentive hearing, and may hope for the success of his measures, the adoption of his arguments. If he be wanting in these qualities, it will detract from his influence.

How to form character, what principles it is necessary to follow to make it strong, sound, and pure, are questions that open a very wide field for thought and study. It is a matter upon which it is very easy to be led astray. Men of very good character frequently are unable to influence a jury, a court, or an assembly, because they are wanting in eloquence, and men of eloquence frequently win the favor of an audience though deficient in character. Yet it should not be supposed that it is of no consequence at all. We cannot say that the advocate who is notoriously corrupt, immoral, or licentious, has the same weight as one of pure, unselfish mo-

tives, with equal oratorical powers. But what we said first is frequently true, that high moral character will not supply the place of great eloquence in cases where eloquence alone is demanded. If a person of irresolute, changeable, venal nature can sway an audience, how much more powerful will be the effect of a strong, steady, unpurchasable character to give emphasis to every word uttered by the speaker? But how to obtain this desirable quality is a difficult question to decide. Much of it will depend upon the education, which we have just considered. Take, for example, a speaker's reputation for *consistency*, that is, for uniformity in his advice and conduct as a leader of public opinion. It needs no argument to show it adds greatly to his influence if he can truthfully say that the advice he is now giving is the same that he offered ten, twenty, or thirty years ago that the principles he now advocates are the same that he has always maintained. The great object of such a claim is to win the confidence of his hearers, to show that the speaker has not shifted his views to suit the varying and uncertain tides of popular opinion, but that, in his early career, he took his stand on certain solid grounds of public action, and has pursued his course with unfaltering courage and fidelity. Such a title, if well founded, cannot fail to win favor. It is in matters of this kind that the speaker shows his character as distinct from the mere power of oratory. It is a quality higher even than this gift itself. It serves

as a plummet by which his speech can be measured. The great importance of this element is very apparent from the readiness with which an advocate is assailed by an opponent for the want of it. If at any time any one has made a speech differing in sentiments from that under consideration, a watchful adversary will always be ready to find out and make the charge of inconsistency, and it is often very difficult and sometimes impossible to successfully meet an attack of this kind. In fact, this is almost the only element of character that it is deemed courteous to avert to in debate. While private malice and an unlicensed press bring almost every unfortunate weakness of a prominent man before the broad gaze of the public, in forensic discussion there is a greater and better tendency to throw a mantle over many of the minor shortcomings common to all men, and indulge only in such criticisms of an opponent as are in some way connected with the matter in dispute.

A fine example of the force of this claim to a uniform course of conduct is to be found in the eloquent outburst of E. D. Baker. In speaking of his general tendency to follow the cause of freedom, the orator said:—

“Here, then, long years ago, I took my stand by freedom, and where in youth my feet were planted, there my manhood and my age shall march. And, for one, I am not ashamed of freedom. I know her power; I rejoice in her majesty; I walk beneath the banner; I

glory in her strength; I have seen her again and again struck down on a hundred chosen fields of battle. I have seen her friends fly from her. I have seen her foes gather around her. I have seen them bind her to the stake. I have seen them give her ashes to the winds, regathering them again that they might scatter them yet more widely. But when they turned to exult, I have seen her again meet them, face to face, clad in complete steel, and brandishing in her strong right hand a flaming sword, red with insufferable light. And therefore I take courage. The people gather around her once more. The genius of America will at last lead her sons to freedom."

The reader will readily perceive that one elegance of this passage consists in its describing a *long* period of devotion to certain principles.

No better illustration of the weight of personal character in prompting eloquent outbursts can be found than in the reply of Lord Thurlow, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer under George the Third, to some aspersions cast upon his humble origin, by the Duke of Clarence, in the course of a debate in the House of Lords. Lord Thurlow advanced to the seat from which an English chancellor usually addressed the House and said: "My lords, I am amazed! Yes, my lords, I am amazed at his grace's speech. The noble duke cannot look before him, behind him, or on either side of him, without seeing some noble peer who owes his seat in this house to his successful exertions in the profession to which I belong. Does he not feel that it is as honorable to

owe it to these as to being the accident of an accident? To all these noble lords, the language of the noble duke is as applicable and as insulting as it is to myself. But I don't fear to meet it singly and alone. No one venerates the peerage more than I do, but, my lords, I must say that the peerage solicited me, and not I the peerage,—nay, more, I can say, and will say, that as a peer of Parliament as speaker of this right honorable House, as keeper of the great seal, as guardian of his majesty's conscience, as Lord High Chancellor of England, nay, even in that character alone, in which the noble duke would think it an affront to be considered, but which character none can deny me, as a man, I am at this time as much respected as the proudest peer I now look down upon."

Stephen A. Douglas in his contest with Abraham Lincoln laid particular claim to the merit of having adopted and maintained a uniform course on the subject of popular sovereignty. His opponents contended that he was guilty of an inconsistency in favoring the Missouri Compromise and then advocating the Kansas-Nebraska bill which repealed that measure. To this charge Mr. Douglas replied: "All we have to do, therefore, is to adhere firmly in the future, as we have done in the past, to the principles contained in the recommendation of the President in his annual message, that the example of the Minnesota case shall be carried out in all future cases of the admission of Territories into the Union



as States. Let that be done and the principle of popular sovereignty will be maintained in all of its vigor and all of its integrity. I rejoice to know that Illinois stands prominently and proudly forward among the States which first took their position firmly and immovably upon the principle of popular sovereignty, applied to the Territories as well as the States. We all recollect when, in 1850, the peace of the country was disturbed in consequence of the agitation of the slavery question, and the effort to force the Wilmot Proviso upon all the Territories, that it required all the talent and all the energy, all the wisdom, all the patriotism of a Clay and a Webster united with other great party leaders, to devise a system of measures by which peace and harmony could be restored to our distracted country. Those compromise measures eventually passed and were recorded on the statute book, not only as the settlement of the then existing difficulties, but as furnishing a rule of action which should prevent in all future time the recurrence of like evils, if they were firmly and fairly carried out. Those compromise measures rested, as I said in my speech in Chicago, on my return home that year, upon the principle that every people ought to have the right to form and regulate their own domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution. They were founded upon the principle that, while every State possessed that right under the Constitution, the same right ought to

be extended to and exercised by the people of the Territories. When the Illinois Legislature assembled, a few months after the adoption of these measures, the first thing the members did was to review their action on this slavery agitation, and to correct the errors into which their predecessors had fallen. You remember that their first act was to repeal the Wilmot Proviso instructions to our United States Senators, which had been previously passed, and in lieu of them to record another resolution upon the journal with which you must all be familiar—a resolution brought forward by Mr. Ninian Edwards, and adopted by the House of Representatives by a vote of sixty-one in the affirmative to four in the negative. That resolution I can quote to you in almost the exact language. It declared that the great principle of self-government was the birthright of freemen, was the gift of heaven, was achieved by the blood of our revolutionary fathers, and must be continued and carried out in the organization of all the Territories and the admission of all the new States. That became the Illinois platform by the united voices of the Democratic party and of the Whig party in 1851, all the Whigs and all the Democrats in the Legislature uniting in an affirmative vote upon it, and there being only four votes in the negative, of abolitionists, of course; that resolution stands upon the journal of your Legislature to this day and hour, unrepealed, as a standing, living, perpetual instruction

to the Senators of Illinois in all time to come, to carry out that principle of self-government and allow no limitation upon it in the organization of any Territories or the admission of any new States. In 1854, when it became my duty, as chairman of the Committee on Territories, to bring forward a bill for the organization of Kansas and Nebraska, I incorporated that principle in it, and Congress passed it, thus carrying the principle into practical effect. I will not recur to the scenes which took place all over the country in 1854, when the Nebraska bill passed. I could then travel from Boston to Chicago by the light of my effigies in consequence of having stood up for it. I leave it for you to say how I met that storm, and whether I quailed under it; whether I did not 'face the music,' justify the principle, and pledge my life to carry it out."

Still another pertinent example is to be found in the Webster-Hayne debate. One of the first attacks made by Mr. Hayne on Mr. Webster arose from the former referring to a speech of the latter delivered in 1825, five years before the debate, in which Mr. Hayne believed he had found a glaring inconsistency in Mr. Webster's position in 1830 as compared with what he held in 1825.

Mr. Hayne began the attack by saying:—

"Now, sir, will it be believed by those who now hear me—and who listened to the gentleman's denunciation of my doctrines yesterday—that a book then lay open

before him, nay, that he held it in his hand and read from it certain passages from his own speech delivered in the House of Representatives in 1825, in which speech he himself contended for the very doctrine I had advocated, and all in the same terms? Here is the speech of the Hon. Daniel Webster contained in the first volume of Gale's and Seaton's Register of Debates (page 151), delivered in the House of Representatives on the 18th of January, 1825, in a debate on the Cumberland Road, the very debate from which the Senator read yesterday. I shall read from the celebrated speech two passages, from which it will appear that both as to the past and the future policy of the government in relation to the public lands, the gentleman from Massachusetts maintained in 1825 substantially the same opinions which I have advanced, but which he now so strongly reprobates. I said, sir, that the system of *credit sales* by which the West has been constantly in debt to the United States, and by which their wealth had been drawn off to be expended elsewhere, had operated injuriously upon their prosperity. On this point the gentleman from Massachusetts, in January, 1825, expressed himself thus: 'There could be no doubt if gentlemen looked at the money received into the treasury from the sale of the public lands to the West and then looked to the whole amount expended by government (even including the whole amount of what was laid out for the army) the latter must be allowed to be very inconsiderable and *there must be a constant drain of money from the West to pay for public lands*. It might be said that this was no more than the reflux of capital which had previously gone over the mountains.

Be it so, still its practical effect was to produce inconvenience, if not *distress, by absorbing the capital of the people.* I contended that the public lands ought not to be treated merely as a fund for revenue; that they ought not to be hoarded as a great treasure. On this point the Senator expressed himself thus: Government, he believed, had received eighteen or twenty millions of dollars from the public lands, and it was with the greatest satisfaction he adverted to the charge which had been introduced in the mode of paying for them; *yet he could never think that the national domain was to be regarded as any great source of revenue.* The great object of the government in respect to these lands was not so much the money derived from their sale as it was the *getting them settled.* What he meant to say was he did not think they ought to hug that domain as a great treasure to enrich the exchequer.

“Now, Mr. President, it will be seen that those very doctrines which the gentleman indignantly abandons, were urged by him in 1825, and if I had actually borrowed my sentiments from those which he then avowed, I could not have followed more closely in his footsteps. Sir, it is only since the gentleman quitted this book, yesterday, that my attention has been called to the sentiments he expressed in 1825; and if I had remembered them, I might possibly have been deterred from uttering sentiments here which, it might well be supposed, I had borrowed from that gentleman. In 1825 the gentleman told the world that the public lands ought not to be treated as a treasure. What the deliberate opinion of the gentleman on this subject may be belongs not to me to determine; but I do not think that he can with the

slightest shadow of justice and propriety impugn my sentiments, while his own recorded sentiments are identical with my own."

On this point of the controversy Mr. Webster said:—

"Having dwelt long on this convention (the Hartford Convention) and other occurrences of that day, in the hope (which will probably not be gratified) that I should leave the course of this debate to follow him at length in those excursions, the honorable member returned and attempted another object. He referred to a speech of mine in the other house, the same which I had occasion to allude to myself the other day, and has quoted a passage or two from it, with a bold though uneasy and laboring air of confidence, as if he had detected in me an inconsistency. Judging from the gentleman, a stranger to the course of the debate and to the point in discussion would have imagined from so triumphant a tone that the honorable member was about to overwhelm me with manifest contradiction.

"Any one who heard him, and who had not heard what I had in fact previously said, must have thought me routed and discomfited, as the gentleman had promised. Sir, a breath blows all this triumph away. There is not the slightest difference in the sentiments of my remarks on the two occasions. What I said here on Wednesday is in exact accordance with the opinions expressed by me in the House in 1825. Though the gentleman had the metaphysics of Hudibras, though he were able

'To sever and divide  
A hair 'twixt north and northwest side,'

he could not insert his metaphysical scissors between the fair reading of my remarks in 1825 and what I said here last week. There is not only no contradiction, no difference, but, in truth, too exact a similarity both in thought and language to be entirely in just taste. I had myself quoted the same speech, had recurred to it, and spoke with it open before me, and much of what I said was nothing more than a repetition from it. . . . In order to make finishing work with this alleged contradiction, permit me to recur to the origin of this debate and review its course. This seems expedient, and may be done as well now as any time. [Here Mr. Webster takes up the thread of the discussion from the beginning, and then returns to the contradiction.] But I come to the point of the alleged contradiction. In my remarks on Wednesday, I contended that we could not give away gratuitously all the public lands; that we held them in trust; that the government had solemnly pledged itself to dispose of them as a common fund for the common benefit, and to sell and settle them as its discretion should dictate. Now, sir, what contradiction does the gentleman find to this sentiment in the speech of 1825? He quotes me as having then said that we ought not to hug these lands as a very great treasure. Very well, sir; supposing me to be accurately reported in that expression, what was the contradiction? I have not now said that we should hug these lands as a favorite source of pecuniary income, no such thing. It is not my view. What I have said, and what I do say, is that they are a common fund—to be disposed of for the common benefit, to

be sold at low prices, for the accommodation of settlers, keeping the object of settling the lands as much in view as that of raising money from them. This I say now and this I have always said. Is this hugging them as a favorite treasure? Is there no difference between hugging and hoarding this fund, on the one hand, as a great treasure, and on the other of disposing of it at low prices, placing the proceeds in the general treasury of the union? My opinion is that as much is to be made of the land as fair and reasonably may be, selling it all the while at such rates as to give the fullest effect to the settlements. This is not giving it away to the States as the gentleman would propose, nor is it hugging the fund closely and tenaciously as a favorite treasure; but it is, in my judgment, a just and wise policy, perfectly according with all the various duties which rest on government. So much for my contradiction. And what is it? Where is the ground for the gentleman's triumph? What inconsistency in word or doctrine has he been able to detect? Sir, if this be a sample of this discomfiture with which the honorable gentleman threatened me, commend me to the word 'discomfiture' the rest of my life."

In answer to those who charged him with inconsistency in his political principles, Edmund Burke replied by the use of a very appropriate and beautiful metaphor. "When," said he, "the equipoise of the vessel in which I sail may be endangered by overloading it one on side, I am desirous of carrying the small weight of my reason to that which may preserve its equipoise."

These illustrations will suffice to show that he



who aspires to be an orator must pay careful attention to character, and above all for that of consistency; nothing will avail him so much as a valid title to this quality. The speaker who is known to raise his voice uniformly for freedom, for reform, for the abatement of useless prerogatives, for education, for the elevation of mankind, will assuredly carry more weight by his speech than one who vacillates from one set of principles to another, who at one moment declaims loudly against oppression, and in the next is fawning at the feet of tyranny.

Next and very near to the question of the character of the orator, and possibly forming a part of it, is the motive of the speaker, the incentive that prompts him in his utterances, that which gives life, vigor and color to his arguments. We think this should be treated of separately. For instance, a person may be consistent in pursuing a certain course of conduct, that is, his advocacy of a given set of doctrines may never waver from one line, but his motive in so doing may be selfish and sinister in a very great degree. Thus a large manufacturer could very consistently argue for a protective tariff, but his motive could well be impugned as selfish. So a politician might cry out clamorously for the adoption of certain measures, but the incentive to his declamation might be the hope of political advancement. The audience must be allowed to weigh these considerations before reposing full confidence in him who addresses them. The

motives, therefore, of the effective speaker must be pure, must be unselfish, as far at least as it is possible for men to act clear of interested purposes. It is this principle that distinguishes moral heroism, and nowhere does it shine so conspicuously as in speech. When an audience can feel that every utterance is the outcome of good-will, of earnest desire for good, unmixed with sordid and personal ambition, they lend a ready and willing ear to the speaker and are eager to follow his counsels.

It may be asked in this connection if it would not be extremely difficult, nay, impossible, to find a purely unselfish, disinterested orator. If we include in the term "selfish" all men of eloquence who may be employed for reward, like lawyers, and those actuated by motives of personal ambition, like our distinguished statesmen, we would have to answer in the affirmative. But is it not carrying the imputation of selfishness too far to include in one sweep all such as come under these classes? Professional advantage and personal aggrandizement are certainly at the bottom of much fine speech-making, but there is a broad distinction between laudable ambition and the deliberate adoption of a certain professional or political course of conduct, simply because it may be for the moment popular and attractive, and then abandoning the cause when these allurements are flown. Thus our faith in the honesty of purpose and purity of motive of Stephen A. Douglas is very much increased

by his withstanding the storm of indignation which met his first announcement of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, a vivid account of which is given by himself in a speech on that subject. (See ante, page 63.) Had Judge Douglas, to use his own language, "quailed before the storm," he would leave the impression that popularity was the object of his ambition, and when it began to wane, he veered his principles to catch the varying currents of mere vulgar applause; as it is, no matter what we may think of the principle itself, we must believe its author was actuated by an honest purpose.

Mercenary motives, of course, would detract from an orator's influence. In the contest between Andrew Jackson and the United States Bank under the management of Nicholas Biddle, the bank was defended against the attacks of the administration by Mr. Webster and Mr. Clay. These statesmen were in turn charged with being under pecuniary obligations to the bank, and hence their arguments were tainted with mercenary motives. This charge they effectually denied, claiming it was acts of usurpation on the part of the administration that excited their opposition, and not mere pecuniary favors received or to be received by them.

It will be asked in this connection What estimate can be placed on that great body of forensic eloquence which comes from our lawyers? While the lawyer undoubtedly speaks for pay, is a hired advocate, yet there are few who take such a nar-

row view of his position as to allow the mere fact of his obtaining a fee for his services to stand between them and the effect of his speech. Strained indeed would be the argument which would shut out the eloquence of Erskine, of Webster, of Prentiss, of Choate, simply because those great advocates were performing a service for which they were hired. The great principles of law and evidence for which they contended, the blaze of wit which cast its brilliant rays over an enraptured jury and audience, the flashes of intellectual brightness, the beams of wit and humor, and the melting power of pathos, were sufficient to relegate the mere pecuniary element far into the background. Moreover, as the advocates on each side are in the same condition as to reward, neither can derive any advantage in this respect over the others. Nevertheless, after admitting all that has just been laid down, it is still true that pecuniary motives will taint very frequently the cause of an advocate. Where, for example, as is too frequently the case, a multitude of counsel is arrayed against a culprit who may perhaps be entirely innocent, or, if guilty, there appears to be an attempt at a persecution instead of a prosecution, the effect of the seeming interestedness will be prejudicial. The celebrated S. S. Prentiss, in one of his most eloquent jury speeches, in the case of the People *versus* Wilkinson, with a sarcasm that was truly withering, alluded to the seeming anger of one of the advocates of the other

side, who evidently was doing, and expected to do, a large amount of the bull-dog part of the proceeding, as follows: "The money of the prosecutor has purchased the talent of the advocate; and the contract is that blood shall be exchanged for gold. The learned and distinguished gentleman to whom I allude, and who sits before me, may well excite the apprehension of the most innocent. If rumor speak truth, he has character sufficient, even though without ability, and ability sufficient, even without character, to crush the victims of his purchased wrath." It is needless to say that Mr. Prentiss' client was acquitted.

One of the finest examples of the injurious effect of an apparent selfish motive in public life, occurs in the career of one of the greatest American orators, Henry Clay. In the election of President in 1824, four candidates were voted for by the people,—John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, William H. Crawford and Henry Clay. The choice was then made by the House of Representatives. When the first ballot was taken, it was found that the fewest votes were cast for Mr. Clay, and that the choice lay between the other three; of these three Mr. Crawford was unavailable on account of feeble health; the contest then narrowed down between Mr. Adams and General Jackson. The votes cast for Mr. Clay became, therefore, of great importance, as they would decide the result. They were cast for Mr. Adams, thus making him Presi-

dent of the United States. When he entered upon the duties of the high office, he tendered the office of Secretary of State to Mr. Clay, by whom it was accepted. The coincidence, therefore, between Mr. Clay's causing the election of Mr. Adams as President, and his acceptance of office under him, was sufficient to enable Mr. Clay's enemies to make the charge that there was a "bargain" between Mr. Clay and Mr. Adams that the former should support the latter on condition of this appointment being made. While the matter has lost much of its significance now, still it illustrates the care that should be exercised to let no cry of self-interest interfere to mar a reputation otherwise invulnerable to attack. In this instance it was conceded by Mr. Clay himself that the charge, though unfounded in fact, had a mischievous effect among those who did not take time to investigate its truth or falsity.

The varieties of motives that may actuate a speaker are as innumerable as the shades of thought itself. Thus they may be straightforward and disinterested, or sinister and selfish, the result of laudable ambition to excel, or the rancorous outpourings of disappointment, the promptings of pure patriotism, or the vicious and tainted counsels of the demagogue. Several of these classes we have noticed already. One or two others deserve attention.

Patriotism, or the disinterested, or, more properly, the interested, regard for one's country is the highest motive that actuates the counsels, or inflames

the eloquence of the orator; but how difficult it is to determine with accuracy in whose bosom it dwells; the veriest and most purchasable demagogue is often the one who lays loudest claims to it.

We can look with a great deal of pleasurable satisfaction to the spirit which animated the orators of the Revolution. There can be but little question that their eloquence which has come down to us from that period was the outflow of a high and unselfish purpose to advance the interest of their country, and with it the cause of free government generally irrespective of the consequences to themselves or to their fortunes. The characters and motives of these men have been eloquently described by the greatest orator of that age. Speaking of the Colonial Assembly sitting at Philadelphia, Lord Chatham said: "When your lordships look at the papers transmitted to us from America, when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause and wish to make it your own. For myself, I must declare and avow that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favorite study, I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master states of Europe—that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your lordships that all attempts to im-

pose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental nation, must be vain, must be fatal."

In weighing the effects of the speeches of Adams, of Patrick Henry, of James Otis, of Fisher Ames, that which gives life and power to their language is its patriotism. Without this it would be as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. When men utter exalted sentiments and are ready to stake their lives and fortunes, their honor and all that is dear and sacred in life, in their defense, then eloquence becomes a power which can no more be resisted than the rays of the sun at its greatest splendor. It is this feeling especially which gives emphasis to the lofty sentiments of Demosthenes in his contest with *Æschines*, which pervades the periods of Webster in his debate with Hayne, and which fires the heart at the words of Lincoln on the field of Gettysburg.

But it often happens that those hold very divergent views on questions of public policy, who in the matter of patriotism are equally sincere. The Royalist and the Puritan were doubtless firm in the belief that they were actuated only by devotion to their country, the one by resisting unlawful aggressions of the king, even to the extent of destroying royalty itself, the other by sustaining royal power, even though he who held it was unworthy of the trust. So, too, in our country we have had a painful example of men of eloquence holding



very contrary views of allegiance and fidelity to country, one insisting that the state and the others that the general government had the first claim upon him. Possibly the only rule that can be laid down to decide these intricate points is that the effect of such discordant and irreconcilable counsels on the question of eloquence will turn upon the speaker's *sincerity*.

This element must not be wanting. Erroneous and mistaken views frequently prevail because their proponents are sincere and earnest, while the more correct and safer counsels fail from a want of the same quality. Eloquence, like good coin, must not only have the proper stamp but the proper ring. It must come from the heart, as well as out of the mouth. Even that common charge of inconsistency which we have seen is so ready on men's lips, will fall harmless when the changeful or inconstant purpose seems sincere, not a deviation from the true course through motives of fear, self-interest, or mercenary advantages, but a return to sound principles after a fruitless and mistaken search for them in the wrong channels.

One of the best illustrations of this want of sincerity in public men is to be found in English history in the time of Charles the Second. The reign of this king was characterized by very loose and unstable principles in political and religious affairs. His personal passions were of a not over-refined nature, and he was wanting in those

broad elements of statesmanship which produce peace and harmony at home and command respect abroad.

The politicians of the age were no more stable than the monarch. The frequent fluctuations in the tide of public events, now surging toward one principle and soon receding to another, made a firm and stable adherence to any one course of conduct and counsel almost impossible. We can say this much in mitigation of the character of the two prominent politicians of the time, the Earl of Shaftesbury and the Duke of Buckingham. Their portraits have been drawn by one of England's greatest poets, which are here given as the best characterization of the unsteady type of public men which we have endeavored to describe.

SHAFTESBURY.

"Of these the false Achithophel was first;  
A name to all succeeding ages curst;  
For close designs and crooked counsels fit,  
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;  
Restless, unfixed in principles and place,  
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace,  
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,  
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,  
And o'erinformed the tenement of clay,  
A daring pilot in extremity;  
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,  
He sought the storms, but for a calm unfit,  
Would steer too near the sands to boast his wit."

The character of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, is thus portrayed:—

"Some of their chiefs were princes in the land.  
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,  
A man so various that he seemed to be  
Not one but all mankind's epitome;  
Stiff in opinion, always in the wrong,  
Was everything by turns and nothing long,  
But in the course of one revolving moon,  
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;  
Then all for woman, painting, rhyming, drinking,  
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.  
Blest madman, who could every hour employ  
With something new to wish or to enjoy;  
Railing and praising were his usual themes,  
And both to show his judgment in extremes;  
So over-violent or over-civil  
That every man with him was God or devil."

Lest the student should lose sight of the requirements of the orator, thus briefly stated and exemplified, we will close the chapter with a summary of the most important of them.

The speaker, then, should possess a good education, acquired either at our schools and colleges or in private study and contact with mankind. He should cultivate a character for a firm and constant adherence to fixed and certain principles, and not watch the popular tide to float on its surface. He should be bold and courageous in the enunciation of those principles, and evince fortitude and show faith in his convictions when they seem under the ban of popular disapproval. He should never lay himself open to a charge of mercenary or other selfish motives sufficient to warp his judgment or lessen the effect of his counsels.

He should above all cherish a pure patriotism, which, though often questioned, will, if genuine, at last meet a full response in the minds and hearts of all thinking men.

He should be sincere and earnest in his utterances, so that men may feel that whatever other errors there may be in his arguments, they are not the vitiated lucubrations of the demagogue.

## CHAPTER III.

LANGUAGE.—THE NECESSITY FOR ITS CAREFUL STUDY.

—WORDS.—SENTENCES.—FIGURE.

LANGUAGE is, of course, the great medium through which the speaker reaches his hearers. It is the instrument upon which he performs to move the feelings, excite the interest, and win the admiration of his audience.

Many of the most important concerns in political life depend upon the proper construction to be given to words, phrases, and sentences in public documents, instruments, and decisions, matters which very frequently depend for solution upon a correct knowledge of the structure of language, upon mere grammatical and rhetorical proficiency.

It often becomes the task of the orator to explain obscure terms by clear ones, to disentangle involved sentences, to polish rough and uncouth phrases, to substitute new for old words, to take his adversary's position and explain and analyze it better than his opponent himself, and to do all this by means of full, clear, rounded and polished periods. Objects so desirable can be accomplished only by devoting great and assiduous attention to the study of language.

(81)

Cicero, as might be expected, is particularly emphatic and pronounced upon the importance of a correct knowledge of the mother tongue. For example, he says that "the accurate choice of words is the foundation of eloquence," and, moreover, "that a pure and correct style is the groundwork and very basis and foundation upon which an orator must build his other accomplishments." To this high testimony nothing can be added.

A correct and thorough knowledge of language is to a very great extent embraced in a good education, no matter to what profession we are devoted. But to the orator something more is necessary. He must acquire a profound insight into the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences, for its own sake. A word misused or misplaced, an inelegant expression, a cumbrous or inartistic sentence, a faulty period, may be excused in every-day conversation, but such indulgence will not be granted to an advocate in an effort which he purposely designs and expects to influence popular opinion, and upon which he stakes his reputation. How this superior knowledge is to be acquired is an important question. As stated in regard to education in general, it may come from scholastic training, as in the case of Webster and Randolph, or from private study and intercourse with mankind, as in that of Lincoln and Douglas. So long as it is among the orator's acquirements, it will make no difference whence it is derived.

A thorough acquaintance with literature will be of great avail. The Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, the speeches of Chatham, Pitt, Burke, Erskine, Webster, Clay, and Randolph, constitute an inexhaustible fund of good, pure English. To these sources, as to pleasant fountains, the young speaker should repeatedly turn. To repeat what was said in the preceding chapter, it is in this connection that the study of the Greek and Latin languages assumes great importance. There are two points which tell strongly in favor of the study of the classics: First, they are classics, that is, the highest type of literature of the two greatest nations of antiquity; and second, the labor to translate them into our own tongue must of necessity compel the student to become more or less familiar with good English. To read one of Cicero's orations in the original Latin is a beneficial study, because it is a model of eloquence, which has won the admiration of ages; but if, in addition, we endeavor to render it into another language, the task will compel us to write a somewhat similar oration in the latter tongue. On any hypothesis this must be beneficial.

The consideration of the study of language naturally begins with that of words. These, to use the expression of Cicero, are the materials of the orator—that which he is to mould into various forms to produce strength, harmony, and beauty. To make a speech thoroughly effective, the precise value of each and every word should be carefully

weighed and considered. We cannot read the great passages in our famous orations without perceiving that minute and careful attention has been given not only to the formation of the sentences, but to every word in the composition. Take, for example, the opening of the great speech of Abraham Lincoln, delivered at Springfield, Illinois, June 7, 1858. Should we attempt to replace any word in this part of the effort with another, it would be found a difficult undertaking. A similar remark might be made of all other truly great speeches. The same might not be said, perhaps, of the entire effort, but it will assuredly be found to be true of the great passages, as in the example just referred to. There are many points in a public address about which there would be but little controversy, but those great truths which the speaker wishes to have believed rather than others, the expressions which contain the pith and substance of what he intends to promulgate as his own peculiar views, must be incased in language which will exactly and precisely fit the thought, as the glove does the hand. For example, the phrases, "irrepressible conflict," "this nation cannot endure half slave and half free," "millions for defense but not one cent for tribute," "liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable;" these must have been the result of close attention paid to the force of expression and not mere hap-hazard ebullitions due to the spur of the moment.

Words should be employed by the orator which



are not only readily understood by the audience, but by those who, at any time, may have occasion to read the speech. An ill-chosen word may sometimes so mystify a reader or hearer that he will lose interest in the rest of the effort. There are a sufficient number of words within the comprehension of every intelligent audience, by the judicious use of which the speaker can make himself well understood. His aim should be to bring his meaning within the reach of as many as possible of his hearers. Thus where a term may be well understood by a certain portion of the assemblage but perhaps not clearly comprehended by others, he would do well to use one familiar to all. For example, is not the word "understand" more familiar than "comprehend," "coal oil" than "petroleum," "opposite" than "antipodal," and so on. Yet it should not be supposed that sense should be sacrificed in order to enlighten a dull understanding; no more, in fact, than we should endanger the solidity and comfort of a public building to satisfy a vulgar taste in matters of architecture. Both should meet, if possible, but if not, then let the laws of language prevail.

The importance of mere word knowledge is nowhere made more manifest than in questions arising under our form of government. No sooner was the Federal Constitution adopted, nay, even before its adoption, the question arose as to the relative rights of the States and the government. Where did the

former end and the latter begin? In other words, was the Federal Union a simple compact, contract, bargain, or agreement to which the consent of the contracting parties was necessary and from which one could recede at any moment it considered the contract violated? or did the Constitution represent a government, stable and irrevocable, which recognized no right of separation in the States, unless that of revolution? It will readily be seen that these considerations open a wide field for discussion. The question immediately arises in such controversies, What is a compact? what is a government? and so on. This brings us to the consideration of the nature of these terms. Now, precisely these questions were discussed by our ablest statesmen, and they were argued largely from a purely grammatical and etymological standpoint. This is well shown in the celebrated speech of John C. Calhoun on the nature of the Federal Government, delivered in the Senate of the United States, February 26, 1833, in reply to Daniel Webster. Portions of it are as follows:—

“The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Webster) in his argument against the resolutions, directed his attack almost exclusively against the first, on the ground, I suppose, that it was the basis of the other two, and that unless the first could be demolished, the others would follow, of course. In this he was right. As plain and as simple as the facts contained in the first are, they cannot be admitted to be true without admit-

ting the doctrines for which I and the state I represent contend. He commenced his attack with a verbal criticism on the resolution, in the course of which he objected strongly to two words, 'constitutional' and 'accede,' to the former, on the ground that the word as used ('constitutional compact') was obscure—that it conveyed no definite meaning—and that 'constitution' was a noun substantive and not an adjective. I regret that I have exposed myself to the criticism of the Senator. I certainly did not intend to use any expression of doubtful sense, and if I have done so, the Senator must attribute it to the poverty of my language, and not to design. I trust, however, that the Senator will excuse me when he comes to hear my apology. In matters of criticism, authority is of the highest importance, and I have an authority of so high a character in this case for using the expression which he considers so obscure and so unconstitutional, as will justify me even in his eyes. It is no less than the authority of the Senator himself, given on a solemn occasion (the discussion of Mr. Foote's resolution), and doubtless with great deliberation, after having weighed the force of the expression. [Here Mr. Calhoun read from Mr. Webster's speech in the debate on the Foote Resolutions, in 1830, as follows.]

“Nevertheless, I do not complain, nor would I countenance any movement to alter this arrangement of representation. It is the original bargain—the compact—let it stand let the advantage of it be fully enjoyed. The Union itself is too full of benefits to be hazarded in propositions for changing its original basis. I go for the Constitution as it is, and for the Union as it is. But I am resolved not to submit in silence to accusa-

tions, either against myself individually, or against the North, wholly unfounded and unjust—accusations which impute to us a disposition to evade the constitutional compact, and to extend the power of the Government over the internal laws and domestic condition of the states.’

“It will be seen by this extract,” proceeded Mr. Calhoun, “that the Senator not only used the phrase ‘constitutional compact,’ which he now so much condemns, but, what is still more important, he calls the Constitution a compact—a bargain—which contains important admissions having a direct and powerful bearing on the main issue involved in the discussion, as will appear in the sequel. But strong as his objection is to the word ‘constitutional,’ it is still stronger to the word ‘accede,’ which he thinks has been introduced into the resolution with some deep design, as, I suppose, to entrap the Senate into an admission of the doctrine of State Rights. Here, again, I must shelter myself under authority. But I suspect the Senator, by a sort of instinct (for our instincts often strangely run before our knowledge), had a prescience, which would account for his aversion for the word, that this authority was no less than Thomas Jefferson himself, the great apostle of the doctrine of State Rights. The word was borrowed from him. It was taken from the Kentucky Resolution, as well as the substance of the resolution itself. But I trust I may neutralize whatever aversion the authorship of this word may have excited in the mind of the Senator by the introduction of another authority—that of Washington himself—who, in his speech to Congress, speaking of the admission of North Carolina into the Union, uses this

very term, which was repeated by the Senate in their reply. Yet, in order to narrow the ground between the Senator and myself as much as possible, I will accommodate myself to this strange antipathy against the two unfortunate words, by striking them out of the resolution and substituting in their place those very words which the Senator himself has designated as constitutional phrases. In the place of that abhorred adjective 'constitutional,' I will insert the very noun substantive, 'Constitution,' and in the place of the word 'accede' I will insert the word 'ratify,' which he designated as 'the proper term to be used.'"

This brief extract will show the necessity, nay, the vital importance, of a correct knowledge of single words, especially in dealing with questions arising under a republican form of government with a written Constitution. As a written instrument or document forms the basis of the government, each word carries with it a potential meaning, far beyond what it would have in an ordinary contract. So long as all are agreed on one view of its interpretation, everything goes on in harmony, but as soon as ideas begin to conflict, there is no arbiter but that of arms to decide the controversy. This, it is unfortunate to state, has been the outcome of this very controversy between Daniel Webster and John C. Calhoun, begun in 1833 and not ended till 1865, after millions of treasure had been expended and hecatombs of bodies strewed the fair fields of the South, to solve the simple question whether our ancestors formed a government or made a compact.

In the choice of words, some attention should be paid to the assembly or audience to be addressed. A promiscuous meeting manifestly would not require equal elegance of expression as a Senate or a judicial tribunal. The same criterion in such cases might be followed in the use of language as in that of dress, comfortable and unostentatious in the former, and neat, precise, and formal in the latter. Good English words should be used in all cases, but new ones are being constantly coined and thrown into circulation. With these latter the orator should be familiar and able to employ them to advantage when required. At the same time care should be taken not to descend too far in such matters. Every speaker is in a position to give circulation to some phrase or word which may not prove to be beneficial to the language or to his reputation.

The speeches of Lincoln and Douglas are very valuable as models of good, every-day English. They seldom used a word or expression which could not be understood by any one. This would naturally result from the circumstances of the debate. It took place before the most promiscuous assemblage that could be collected. Men of all grades of society were in the audience. Yet scarcely a misapplied, misfitting word or expression can be found in the entire series of discussions, the report of which would fill a good-sized volume. This speaks well for the skill and ability of the contestants.

Any intelligent reader can enjoy the debate as

well to-day as when it took place, and it will always remain, for this reason as well as many others, one of the classics in forensic literature; a free public American debate on the most interesting and vital questions of modern times, conducted with a good temper, a degree of patience and intelligence, and in a vein of language as pure and strong as it is possible to convey the ideas of the speakers to audiences so many-sided and so keenly sensitive on the subjects discussed. In some of the addresses of Judge Douglas there is a slight tendency to use very vigorous language in speaking of his political opponents, but when we consider the angry feelings excited in those times, the country being on the eve of one of the most gigantic conflicts of modern times, we can readily and should excuse what sometimes seems to go beyond the demands of correct taste.

In the Webster-Hayne contest, we have an example somewhat different from the one just noticed. This took place in the Senate of the United States, before the Senators only, and such other listeners as might be drawn there from curiosity. Every one present was, no doubt, a person of more than average intelligence and information, and by far the larger part of the auditory were men of marked distinction and wide reputation. We would expect, therefore, and so find, a very close adherence to refinement of phrase and elegance of expression. It abounds in measured sentences and sounding periods. It was a contest between swordsmen rather than athletes.

There is no feature of language that deserves more careful attention than the synonym. This term is applied to words of similar meaning; for example, abbreviate, abridge; confound, confuse; bestow, confer; bias, prejudice; sick, ill, etc. The necessity which is imposed upon the speaker of keeping up a continuous discourse, compels him to put his arguments in different forms of expression, so as to reach intellects of various degrees of culture. He has, therefore, to grasp for a new word when he has employed another too often; to expand and elaborate a good thought or idea, so as to emphasize and amplify the strong points of his address. None of these objects could be attained without a close acquaintance with synonymous words and expressions. The neglect of this subject would produce tautology, the too frequent recurrence of the same word. Thus, in enumerating successive propositions in a chain of argument, the orator would say, "In the first place, I maintain;" coming to the next position, his language would be, "I also contend;" approaching the third, he would say, "I further hold;" or, "My next point is," etc. In this manner, by slightly changing the expression, he gives variety to his speech, thereby relieving the strain upon the endurance of his audience. In the midst of an exciting debate he has no time to consult a dictionary, and no matter how important and interesting the occasion may be, he will be allowed but little immunity from the strict rules of the "set



phrase of peace." Like the sun in a stormy sky, this and other excellencies will appear with all the greater brilliancy.

Care should be taken not to adopt too freely the language of other arts. These have forms peculiar to themselves, addressed to and understood only by those who are acquainted with them. The entire effort of the speaker should be directed to enlighten the understanding and thereby sway the judgment of the average hearer and reader. The cultivated listener too frequently has prejudices and passions of his own, which he prefers rather to nurse than to have removed, and not unusually arms himself to resist linguistic arts. With the man of average intelligence the case is usually the reverse. If not readily yielding his preconceived notions to oratorical blows, he is not, on the other hand, so well prepared to withstand the insinuating address of a skillful speaker. What is really an art and device of speech he takes for the canons of truth and sound reasoning. The speaker's aim should be to adapt himself to this grade of intelligence, and he does so by studying the language usually employed by it.

In many respects, for example, there is a parallel between eloquence and poetry. Both require strong imaginative power, full expression, large vocabulary, and accurate use of words and figures. Yet the language of poetry is not that of oratory and it should not be so employed. There are unusual

words, figures, expressions, and periods in the former which are not adapted to the latter. The speech of every-day life would make poetry tame and insipid, while to the orator it is both appropriate and essential. To prove this we need only point to the speeches of all great orators, every one of which, especially in the more eloquent and telling passages, is composed of language which is familiar, that is, free from any technical, confined, or circumscribed phraseology; to use the expression of one of our greatest orators in speaking of another, "familiarily expressing gigantic sentiments and instinctive wisdom." Every word is within the range of the most ordinary understanding.

Next to the power and force of single words, the orator should thoroughly understand the *structure* of the language; this Cicero very aptly defines as "the agreeable connection of one word with another." To make use of a familiar metaphor, after properly annealing, tempering, and welding each link, the next task is to form them into a chain, remembering, to carry the simile still further, that the chain will not be stronger than the weakest link; that is, that a faulty metaphor, a misapplied word or expression, or an ill-proportioned period, will mar the entire effect of a discourse that may abound in eloquent passages.

Every great historic nation has had a language peculiar to itself, the Greek, the Roman, the Italian, the Spanish, the French, the German, the En-

glish: each has marked features which distinguish it from any other, and which almost prevent its being translated with smoothness and accuracy. The rendering is frequently obscure where the original is luminous; sententious where it is condensed; dull, where it is bright. Language is not like the current coin which can be melted down and re-stamped with a foreign superscription. It resembles, rather, the various styles of architecture, in which the pillars, domes, and arches of one form cannot be transferred to another where those very pillars, arches, and domes find no place. This is the reason why the translations of the great masterpieces of antiquity afford such an inadequate idea of the originals. The structure of our language is utterly incapable of being bent and moulded to that of the Greek and Latin. What is terse and epigrammatic in those tongues becomes diffuse in ours, and what in them is smooth and flowing, with us becomes terse and rigid. It is as difficult to give a correct rendition of Cicero, Demosthenes, Homer, Thucydides, or Horace into English as it would be to turn Burke, Chatham, Shakespeare, Hume, or Goldsmith into equally elegant Latin or Greek.

By far the most important feature of speech remains to be noticed, and that is Figure. The use of this term in its broadest acceptation extends to all words and expressions which are used in a sense differing from their usual meaning. This happens

in a variety of ways. Thus we say "sail" for ships, "arms" for war; so we speak of inanimate objects as animate, as "smiling" corn, a "hardened" heart, "O affection, forgiveness, faith, ye are mighty spirits," and so on. Such turns as these add much to the beauty of speech, prose as well as poetry. Cicero says these figures "serve as so many stars to bespangle and illuminate a speech." He is particularly felicitous on this head, comparing figurative language to the use of clothing, which, in a state of nature, is a means of protection from the elements and when this is secured, the mind turns to means and methods of decoration.

The figure most in use is the Metaphor. This is a comparison, either direct or indirect, between two objects of different classes, but between which some resemblance can be traced, either as to their nature or attributes. For instance, we speak of a "storm" of indignation, likening the disturbed feelings of the mind to a commotion of the elements. A resemblance of one object to another will be found to exist very largely between the emotions of the mind, the events of history, and the order of nature; and as men are more familiar with daily phenomena, with sensible rather than insensible objects, they more readily comprehend a subject when put before them through the medium of such comparisons than through delicate shades of abstract thought. The only care of the speaker should be to have these metaphorical allusions appropriate, sug-

gestive, and well handled. While they give untold beauty and elegance to composition, they too frequently leave the speaker open to skillful flank movements of the enemy. This feature of oratory is deserving of great care and skill in its use. While there is a general similarity between every operation of the mind and some natural phenomenon, there are few instances where the likeness is exact. There will be some point where the things compared will begin to differ. A careful orator, therefore, will be on the lookout for such metaphors as do not afford his adversary an opportunity to turn the simile against him.

Well-chosen and well-sustained metaphors are universally considered the greatest embellishment of oratory. Men will often be in doubt as to the correctness of a train of reasoning, however carefully managed and however clearly expressed, but an allusion to the rising sun, the starry heavens, or giving life and motion to inanimate objects, or comparing intellectual conditions with sensible things, will seldom, if ever, fail to attract attention and enforce conviction.

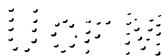
Of all English orators Edmund Burke was the most prolific in this figure. His great imagination enabled him to select with facility, and his correct taste to apply his selections with judgment. His speeches and writings, which are like so many undelivered orations, are full of them. Some of his illustrations have the force of argument. In speak-

ing of the primitive rights of man, then a favorite topic with a certain class of thinkers, he uses this beautiful and apt metaphor, which reads like truth itself: "These metaphysic rights entering into common life like rays of light which pierce an adverse medium are by the laws of nature refracted from their straight line. Indeed, in the great and complicated mass of human passions and concerns, the primitive rights of man undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction."

The following extracts furnish good examples of the facility and elegance with which this great orator employs this form of speech. In commenting upon the manner in which Lord Chatham formed his cabinet, he said:—

"He made an administration so checkered and speckled, he put together a piece of joinery so crossly indented and whimsically dovetailed, a cabinet so variously inlaid, such a piece of diversified mosaic, such a tessellated pavement without cement, here a bit of black stone and there a bit of white, patriots and courtiers, king's friends and republicans, whigs and tories, treacherous friends and open enemies, that it was indeed a very curious show, but utterly unsafe to touch and unsure to stand on. The colleagues whom he had assorted at the same boards stared at each other and were obliged to ask, 'Sir, your name—Sir, you have the advantage of me

—Mr. Such-a-one, I beg a thousand pardons.' I venture to say it did so happen that persons had a single office divided between them who had never spoken to each other in their lives, until they found themselves, they knew not how, pigging together, heads and points in the same trundle-bed." Again: "Deprived of his [Lord Chatham's] influence, they [his friends] were whirled about by the sport of every gust, and easily driven into any port, and as they who joined with them in manning the vessel were the most directly opposite to his opinion, measures, and character, and far the most powerful of the set, they easily prevailed, so as to seize upon the vacant, unoccupied, and derelict minds of his friends, and instantly they turned the vessel wholly out of the course of his policy." Speaking of a prominent politician of the day who had made a favorable impression upon Parliament, he said: "He struck the house between wind and water." Other examples are as follows: "Tyranny is a poor provider, it knows neither how to accumulate nor how to extract." "A sudden light broke in upon us all. It broke in, not through well-contrived and well-disposed windows, but through flaws and breaches, through the gnawing chasms of our ruin." "Ought we, like madmen, to tear off the plasters that the lenient hand of prudence had spread over the wounds and gashes which in our delirium of ambition we had given to our own body?" "Tarnished as the nation is, and as far as it has waded



into the shades of an eclipse, some beams of its former illumination still play upon its surface."

"Whilst the authors of all these evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities. But escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine."

To these may be added a few others. Speaking of the proper ties which should exist between England and her colonies at the time of the Revolutionary War, he said: "For that service, for all service, whether of revenue, trade, or empire, my trust is in her interest in the British Constitution.



My hold on the colonies is in the close affection which grows from common names, from kindred blood, from similar privileges, and equal protection. These are ties which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the ideas of their civil rights associated with your governments, they will cling and grapple to you, and no force under heaven will be of power to tear them from your allegiance. But let it be once understood that your government may be one thing, and their privileges another, that these two things may exist without any mutual relation, the cement is gone; the cohesion is loosened, and everything hastens to decay and dissolution. As long as you have the wisdom to keep the sovereign authority of this country as the sanctuary of liberty, the sacred temple consecrated to our common faith, wherever the chosen race and sons of England worship freedom, they will turn their face towards you. The more they multiply the more friends you will have; the more ardently they love liberty, the more perfect will be their obedience. Slavery they can have everywhere. It is a weed that grows on every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. But until you become lost to all feeling of your true interest and your natural dignity, freedom they can have from none but you. This is the commodity of cheap price of which you have the monopoly. This is the true Act of Navigation, which binds to you the commerce of the

colonies, and through them secures to you the wealth of the world. Is it not the same virtue which does everything for us here in England? Do you imagine, then, that it is the land tax which raises your revenue, that it is the annual vote in the committee of supply which gives you your army, or that it is the Mutiny Bill which inspires it with bravery and discipline?—No! Surely, no! It is the love of the people; it is their attachment to their government from the sense of the deep stake they have in such a glorious institution which gives you your army and your navy, and infuses into both that liberal obedience without which your army would be a base rabble, and your navy nothing but rotten timber.”

This last quotation will strike every admirer of eloquence, as well as every friend of free institutions, as a masterpiece of oratory, coming up fully to the Ciceronian standard, that eloquence is nothing more than wisdom speaking fluently. Its sentiments are lofty, but within the bounds of good sense; its language copious, but not turgid; elegant, but not labored, and its metaphors chaste, correct, and appropriate. The reader should be cautioned, however, that he is not to be too hasty in endeavoring to imitate these fine passages, that is to say, a young orator should not start out with making efforts to say fine things—to express grand and noble thoughts that are fit only for a Burke, an Erskine, or a Webster. The bow of Ulysses can be

drawn only by the master himself. These fine, well-sustained flights are only to be essayed by those who have had long and laborious training and years of strengthening practice. It is only the eye of the eagle that can gaze steadily upon the sun. We must begin where the masters began before we can reach the goal they attained.

Lord Chatham has some very forcible and striking metaphors, one of the most elegant of which is as follows: "A breach has been made in the Constitution—the battlements are dismantled—the citadel is open to the first invader—the walls totter, the Constitution is not tenable. What remains, then, but to stand foremost in the breach, to repair it or perish in it." Here is a very good example, from a very great American orator, Daniel Webster: "Before the termination of that administration the fires of the French Revolution blazed forth as from a new-opened volcano, and the whole breadth of the ocean did not entirely secure us from its effects. The smoke and the cinders reached us, though not the burning lava." Again he says, "If my leader sees new lights and turns a sharp corner, unless I see new lights also, I keep right on in the same path."

Probably we have given sufficient illustrations to show the great advantage of the correct use of figures of speech. They might be multiplied many fold. The question for the student naturally is, How am I going to cultivate this quality? Am I

simply to keep on reading over and over these fine passages and not dare to use or imitate them as just suggested? We answer, By no means. Read and digest the examples, not so much to imitate them as to get used to wings yourself. There are some poets to be read when we wish to compose a poem—they serve to kindle the poetic fires, and when these are lighted we consume our own material. So with the orators. Read them for the same purpose. When you have conceived an idea and got it clear in your mind, ask yourself to what it can be compared. If you are studying some great revolution, it will naturally suggest the figure of a conflagration, perhaps an earthquake, perhaps a volcano, as in the passage of Webster just quoted. What is the nature and effect of volcanoes or earthquakes, will be the next inquiry. It will soon occur to the mind that those nearest to them will be most affected, those remote, less so. Those who happen to be near the brink of the crater will feel the burning lava, while others, to use the expressive language of Mr. Webster, will only feel the effects of the smoke and cinders. So in the case of any subject or principle which protects us from danger. It immediately calls up to the mind the image of the bulwarks of a ship, which keep the passengers from the effects of the waves of the ocean, or of the fortress surrounded by walls or the strong castle resting on buttresses, or the shield used by warriors. When these are broken down, the waters overwhelm

the vessel in the case of a ship, the enemy enters, as in the case of a fortress, the castle yields to the besiegers, and so on. The imagination supplies these objects; judgment and good taste select and use them; their study is therefore to be highly commended. There is no objection, either, to using metaphors that others have employed. We need only discover the new application. Should we endeavor to appropriate the thoughts as well as the figures of Mr. Burke or Mr. Webster, we would be subject to the charge of plagiarism, but if we enter upon a new subject and bring out ideas which we wish to embellish by means of metaphor, we can refer to the ship, the castle, or the fortress as freely as did those great masters.

When a series of expressions or words is used, each one expressing the general sentiment of the speaker in an intensified form, rising from a lower stage to the highest, this constitutes what is known as climax. It is a beautiful and effective figure, and much employed in the higher range of eloquence. Thus Cicero, in his prosecution of Verres for crucifying a Roman citizen, instead of simply describing the offense in one term, relates it in this manner: "It is an outrage to fine a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an atrocious crime; to put him to death is almost parricide; but to crucify him—what shall I call it?"

So Lord Chatham, in one of his speeches against the American war, said: "I am astonished, I am

shocked, to hear such sentiments expressed, to hear them avowed in this house or in this country; principles equally unconstitutional, inhuman, and unchristian;" that is, "unconstitutional," as contrary to established law; "inhuman," as at variance with the common principles of humanity common to all people, and "unchristian," as opposed to the teachings of Christianity, the highest type of religious faith in England. In the same speech he employed this language: "I have laid before you the *ruin* of your power, the *disgrace* of your reputation, the *pollution* of your discipline, the *contamination* of your morals, the *complication of calamities, foreign and domestic*, that overwhelm your sinking country."

Another common and expressive figure frequently used by our best orators is personification; that is, addressing inanimate things and insensible feelings as if they were persons, and in the presence and hearing of the speaker. It is far more common to poetry than prose, but is very beautiful in the latter when used with taste and sustained with ease and elegance.

Some of the best examples are to be found in the speeches of E. D. Baker, an orator of the first rank, who has already furnished some of our best selections. In an oration on the death of a brilliant young lawyer, who had fallen a victim to the so-called code of honor, and had spent his last moments in prayer, he said: "O Affliction, Forgiveness,

Faith! ye are mighty spirits. Ye are powerful angels. And the soul that in its dying moments trusts to these, cannot be far from the gates of heaven, whatever the past life may have been. However passion or excitement may have led a soul astray, if at the last final hour it returns to the lessons of a mother's love, of a father's care, if it learns the great lesson of forgiveness to its enemies, if at the last moment it can utter these words, 'Father of life and light and love!'—these shall be winged angels—troops of blessed spirits—that will bear the fainting, wounded soul to the blessed abodes, and forever guard it against despair. O my friends! those mighty gates, built by the Almighty to guard the entrance to the unseen world, will not open at the battle-ax of the conqueror; they will not roll back if all the artillery of earth were to thunder forth a demand, which, indeed, would be lost in the infinite regions of eternal space; but they will open with thoughts of affection, with forgiveness of injuries, and with prayer."

Apostrophe is another figure occasionally employed with good effect by orators, and consists in turning aside from the general trend of the discourse, and addressing some person or thing in a tone of praise or disparagement. A fine example of apostrophe is to be found in the address of the same speaker on the completion of the Atlantic cable. It is as follows:—

"O Science, thou thought-clad leader of the company

of pure and great souls that toil for their race and love their kind, measurer of the depths of earth and the recesses of heaven, apostle of civilization, handmaid of religion, teacher of human equality and human right, perpetual witness for the divine wisdom, be ever, as now, the great minister of peace! Let thy starry brow and benign front still gleam in the van of progress, brighter than the sword of the conqueror, and welcome as the light of heaven."

S. S. Prentiss, of Mississippi, stands without a superior in thrilling eloquence. His life was an unbroken triumph in oratory, clouded only by its sad and early close. It has been beautifully said of him that—

"The blaze of wit, the flash of bright intelligence,  
The beam of social eloquence,  
Set with his sun."

The following extract is all we have space to give of his unrivaled eloquence. It fully illustrates the subject now under consideration:—

"Glorious New England! Thou art still true to thy ancient fame, and worthy of thy ancestral honors. On thy pleasant valleys rest, like sweet dews of morning, the gentle recollections of our early life; around thy hills and mountains cling, like gathering mists, the mighty memories of the revolution; and far away in the horizon of thy past, gleam, like thy own bright northern lights, the awful virtues of our Pilgrim sires! But while we devote this day to the remembrance of our native land, we forget not that in which our happy lot is



cast. We exult in the reflection that though we count by thousands the miles which separate us from our birth-place, still our country is the same. We are no exiles, meeting on the banks of a foreign river to swell its waters with our homesick tears. Here floats the same banner which rustled above our boyish heads, except that its mighty folds are wider, and its glittering stars increased in number.

"The sons of New England are found in every state of the broad republic; in the East, the South, and the unbounded West, their blood mingles freely with every kindred current. We have but changed our chamber in the paternal mansion; in all its rooms we are at home, and all who inhabit it are our brothers. To us the Union has but one domestic hearth; its household gods are all the same. Upon us, then, peculiarly, devolves the duty of feeding the fires upon that kindly hearth, of guarding with pious care those sacred household gods.

"We cannot do with less than the whole Union; to us it admits of no division. In the veins of our children flow Northern and Southern blood; how shall it be separated? Shall we put asunder the best affections of the heart, the noblest instincts of our nature? We love the land of our adoption; so do we that of our birth. Let us ever be true to both, and always exert ourselves in maintaining the unity of our country, the integrity of the republic.

"Accursed, then, be the hand put forth to loosen the golden chord of union; thrice accursed the traitorous lips which shall propose its severance."

As an example of impassioned speech, reaching the Demosthenian heights of sublimity and pathos,

the short address of Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg, after the celebrated battle which had been fought there, deservedly holds a high rank. The beauty of the sentiment is so well fitted and clothed in proper words, and set off with such appropriate figures, that it is a model of the art that stands without a superior in ancient or modern times. Mr. Lincoln spoke as follows:—

“Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battle field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that those

dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The excellence of the speech consists in its strict compliance with the laws of oratory, to wit, expressing the choicest sentiments in the choicest language. The loftiness of the sentiments set forth will appear to everyone, while the elegance of the language is no less apparent. There is great force in alluding to the origin of our government being likened to a "conception" of its founders; the idea is followed by one equally familiar, and that is a "dedication." The beauty of this thought is enhanced from the nature of the ceremonies taking place, the *dedication* of a cemetery. The orator then follows up the figure, and finally inverts the thought, so to speak, turns to the reverse side of the image, as it were, and there points out the duty of those present rather to consider themselves dedicated to the grand idea of the occasion. The simplicity of the language used is one of its chief beauties, and the well-sustained climax in which the orator holds that they cannot *dedicate*, they cannot *consecrate*, they cannot *hallow* that ground is a masterpiece of the art.

## CHAPTER IV.

EMBELLISHMENT.—PERSONAL, HISTORICAL, RHETORICAL  
AND LOCAL ALLUSIONS.—QUOTATION, ITS USES AND  
ABUSES.

THE various figures noticed in the preceding chapter serve the purpose of ornamenting the discourse as well as enforcing the views of the speaker. There are many other ways of embellishing, ornamenting and illustrating the ideas of the orator as well as by the mere use of figures. Entire subjects may be introduced in order to afford an opportunity of heightening the effect of the oration; matters which serve, so to speak, as braces and studding to which ornaments of language may be attached; subjects which increase the surface upon which fanciful carvings may be placed; niches in the oratorical edifice to receive the creations of the orator's imagination.

Men might speak for hours upon such a subject as the *tariff*, devoting their attention to tables and statistics showing its use or uselessness, without exciting much interest, but an allusion to some pronounced advocate or opponent of the system, if made with grace and fluency, would awaken enthusiasm.

The affairs of mankind are usually controlled

and directed by master spirits in war, politics, or religion, and hence the public ear is more apt to remember the eloquence, prowess, or ability of the men engaged in the contest, than the measures adopted, or the events themselves.

So, too, with the land or state of one's birth. It seems inherent in our nature to keep it in fond remembrance. Any allusion to it by a speaker is watched with sensitive interest. Hence one of the happiest methods of embellishing a speech is by introducing pleasant pictures of places made familiar by their connection with past events, and of men made famous by great actions.

The pages of oratory abound in examples illustrative of these statements. The subjects introduced are not only interesting in themselves, but the allusions abound in metaphor, simile, and every conceivable grace of the art.

Edmund Burke, in the course of a debate on American taxation, drew this eloquent picture of one of his contemporaries, Charles Townsend, a prominent statesman in his day, who must have been of more than ordinary influence to have elicited this noble and discriminating characterization. He said: "For even then, sir, even before the splendid orb was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and for his hour became lord of the ascendant.

“This light, too, is passed and set forever. You understand, to be sure, that I speak of Charles Townsend, officially the reproducer of this fatal scheme, whom I cannot even now remember without some degree of sensibility. In truth, sir, he was the delight and ornament of this house, and the charm of every private society which he honored with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of a more pointed and finished wit, and (where his passions were not concerned) of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment. If he had not so great a stock as some have had who flourished formerly, of knowledge long treasured up, he knew better by far than any man I was ever acquainted with, how to bring together, within a short time, all that was necessary to establish, to illustrate, and to decorate the *side* of the question he supported. He stated the matter skillfully and powerfully. He particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation and display of his subject. His style of argument was neither trite nor vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the house between wind and water, and, not being troubled with too anxious zeal for any matter in question, he was never more tedious, or more earnest, than the preconceived opinions and present temper of his hearers required, to whom he was always in perfect unison. He conformed exactly to the temper of the house; and he seemed to guide because he was always sure to follow it.

“I beg pardon, sir, if, when I speak of this and of other great men, I appear to digress in saying something of their characters. In this eventful history of the revolution of America, the characters of men are of much importance.

"Great men are the guideposts and landmarks in the state. The credit of such men at court, or in the nation, is the true cause of all the public measures. It would be an invidious thing (most foreign, I trust, to what you think my disposition) to remark the errors into which the authority of great names has brought the nation, without doing justice, at the same time, to the great qualities whence that authority arose.

"The subject is instructive to those who wish to inform themselves on whatever of excellence has gone before them. There are many young members in the House (such of late has been the rapid succession of public men) who never saw that prodigy, Charles Townsend, nor, of course, know what a ferment he was able to excite in everything by the violent ebullition of his mixed virtues and failings. For failings he had, undoubtedly—many of us remember them. We are this day considering the effect of them. But he had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause; to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immoderate passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls. He worshiped that goddess wheresoever she appeared; but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favorite habitation, in her chosen temple, the House of Commons."

The free use of metaphor, which distinguishes all the speeches of Mr. Burke, is seen in this elegant and much-admired passage. The beautiful picture presented by representing one great political character as a setting, and the other as a rising orb, is extremely fitting and suggestive.

Speakers should not neglect to cultivate this quality. The heavens and the earth are varied and beautiful enough to furnish suitable objects for infinite comparison. Had Mr. Burke simply said that while one great man was withdrawn from the deliberations of the nation, another, equally eminent, took his place, who for a while held sway, he would have stated in plain English the fact in question. But he resorted to the magnificent metaphor, and thereby produced an equally correct, but infinitely more picturesque and dazzling, conception of the two men. But Mr. Burke is not alone in this species of ornamentation. Mr. Webster, in the contest already alluded to, introduces something of the same kind.

When the country north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi was organized into what was called the Northwest Territory, a man named Nathan Dane, it appears, had something to do with the matter, and was especially instrumental in inserting a provision in the act of organization against the introduction of slavery. We will let Mr. Webster state the matter in his own words:—

“In the course of my remarks the other day, Mr. President, I paid a passing tribute of respect to a very worthy man, Mr. Dane, of Massachusetts. It so happened that he drew the Ordinance of 1787 for the government of the Northwestern Territory. A man of so much ability and so little pretense; of so great a capacity to do good, and so unmixed a disposition for its own



sake ; a gentleman who acted so important a part, forty years ago, in a measure the influence of which is still deeply felt in the very matter which was the subject of debate, might, I thought, receive from me a commendatory recognition."

Having occasion to discuss prison management, Mr. Burke turned very naturally to Howard, the philanthropist, and said:—

"I cannot name this gentleman without remarking that his labors and writings have done much to open the eyes and hearts of mankind. He has visited all Europe, not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples, not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art, not to collect medals nor to collate manuscripts, but to dive into the depths of dungeons, to plunge into the infection of hospitals, to survey the mansions of sorrow and pain, to take the gauge and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt, to remember the forgotten, to attend the neglected, to visit the forsaken, and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries. His plan is original, and it is as full of genius as it is of humanity. It was a voyage of discovery, a circumnavigation of charity. Already the benefit of his labor is felt more or less in every country; I hope he will anticipate his final reward, by seeing all its effects fully realized in his own. He will receive, not by retail, but in gross, the reward of those who visit the prisoner, and he has so forestalled and monopolized this branch of charity that there will be, I trust, little room to merit by such acts of benevolence hereafter."

Allusions, also, to one's country, state, or even local habitation, are interesting and instructive.

In the Hayne-Webster debate we find examples of this kind. The former said:—

“If there be one state in the Union, Mr. President (and I say it not in a boastful spirit), that may challenge comparison with any other for a uniform, zealous, ardent, and uncalculating devotion to the Union, that state is South Carolina. Sir, from the very commencement of the Revolution up to this hour there is no sacrifice, however great, she has not cheerfully made; no service she has hesitated to perform. She has adhered to you in your prosperity, but in your adversity she has clung to you with more than filial affection. No matter what was the condition of her domestic affairs, though deprived of her resources, divided by parties, or surrounded with difficulties, the call of the country has been to her the voice of God.

“Domestic discord ceased at the sound; every man became at once reconciled to his brethren, and the sons of Carolina were all seen crowding together to the temple, bringing their gifts to the altar of their common country.

“What, sir, was the conduct of the South during the Revolution? Sir, I honor New England for her conduct in that glorious struggle. But great as is the praise that belongs to her, I think at least equal honor is due to the South. They espoused the quarrel of their brethren with a generous zeal, which did not suffer them to stop to calculate their interest in the dispute. Favorites of the mother country, possessed of neither ships nor seamen,

to create a commercial rivalryship, they might have found in their situation a guarantee that their trade would be forever fostered and protected by Great Britain. But, trampling on all considerations, either of interest or of safety, they rushed into the conflict, and, fighting for principle, periled all in the sacred cause of freedom. Never was there exhibited in the history of the world higher examples of noble daring, dreadful suffering, and heroic endurance, than by the Whigs of Carolina during the Revolution. The whole State, from the mountains to the sea, was overrun by an overwhelming force of the enemy. The fruits of industry perished on the spot where they were produced, or were consumed by the foe. The plains of Carolina drank up the most precious blood of her citizens. Black and smoking ruins marked the places which had been the habitation of her children. Driven from their homes into the gloomy and almost impenetrable swamps, even there the spirit of liberty survived, and South Carolina (sustained by the example of her Sumpters and her Marions), proved by her conduct that though her soil might be overrun, the spirit of her people was invincible."

This is a truly eloquent and even pathetic passage, and presents a very forcible picture of the conduct of his native State during the period alluded to. On the other hand, Mr. Webster spoke as follows:—

"Let me observe that the eulogium pronounced on the character of South Carolina, by the honorable gentleman, for her revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honor-

able member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent or distinguished character South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor. I partake in the pride of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all. The Lawrences, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Marions—Americans all—whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by state lines than their talents and their patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation they served and honored the country, and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honored name the gentleman himself bears, does he suppose me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism or sympathy for his sufferings than if his eyes had first opened upon the light in Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it is in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, sir; increased gratification and delight, rather.

“Sir, I thank God that if I am gifted with a little of that spirit which is said to be able to raise mortals to the skies I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happened to spring up beyond the little limits of my own state, or neighborhood,—when I refuse for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talents, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion, to liberty and the country; or if I see an uncommon endowment of heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the

South, and if, moved by any local prejudice, or gangrened by state jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth! Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections; let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past; let me remind you that in early times no states cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return. Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution; hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exists, alienation and distrust, are the growth unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that great arm never scattered.

“ Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts. She needs none. There she is; behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history, the world knows it by heart. The past at least is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington and Bunker Hill; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, fallen in the great struggle for independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every state from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever. And, sir, where American liberty first raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it; if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and unnecessary restraint shall succeed to separate it from the Union, by which alone its

existence is made sure, it will stand in the end by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather around it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its glory and on the very spot of its origin."

Recurring to the subject of introducing names eminent in the various walks of life, we will present an extract from a speech of one of our greatest orators, one who fills a very large space in our parliamentary history, and whose life and story form a very interesting and highly instructive chapter in our annals, a man of a high order of genius, but a genius so unique, so apparently contradictory, so full of strange fantasies, and so radically different from those whose sentiments we have thus far been studying, that he has not received the attention from students that his great eminence deserves. That man is John Randolph, of Roanoke. He was not a great expounder of constitutional problems, like Webster; he did not possess the same stately or analytical style; the same weight and dignity of elocution, nor similar powers of general argumentation. In many respects, too, he was unlike another prominent character of his day, Henry Clay. He did not possess the personal magnetism of the latter, nor his regularity of methods, the same coherence of action, the same objective ambition, the Presidency. So, too, he differed from another great

name, John C. Calhoun. He lacked his penetrating logic, his unimpassioned argumentative power, his tenacity to favorite dogmas and opinions. He differed from all these in that wear and tear power, which, in strong natures, allows them to return to the combat with new life and vigor. Though differing in these respects from his contemporaries, he yet displayed qualities possessed by none. In wit and sarcasm, in withering irony, in strong invective and studied denunciation, he excelled them all. His knowledge of history, poetry and the current sciences, the social and economic questions of the period, was equal if not superior to theirs. In linguistic attainments he surpassed them. The reading of his speeches, especially if read between the lines, is as entertaining, if not more so, than that of any of his compeers. His allusions to ancient classical lore are always in good point, his analogies well chosen, and his pure and glittering English is a subject of deserved admiration. In much of his forensic warfare he seemed rather to confound than convince, to pull down rather than to construct. He often spoke more of his opponent than of the subject. He was precisely the character to be little understood by his contemporaries and studied by posterity. In hand-to-hand contests in all legislative bodies, there is a great drain on the patience, endurance and sensibilities of the participants, so that any one without this endurance and patience and with keen sensibilities, cannot well stand the strain. Such was

the case with Randolph. His sensitive nature soon began to lose its equipoise and to yield to the varied impulses that agitated his breast. His finer qualities not being allowed full sway in the contests with cooler and more unimpassioned antagonists, he often sought rather to overwhelm an adversary with a storm of mingled ridicule and irony than by sober argument. In the rude clash of the legislative tournament, his rhetoric took on a keen edge towards which it was dangerous to approach too near.

Webster, Clay and Calhoun fought with different weapons, arms better suited to the jostling tourney of debate. Their defensive as well as offensive armor also was more suitable than his. They bore the attack with greater equanimity. But Mr. Randolph's sword, if not so strong, had a keener edge. He often carried his point, not by turning, but by preventing, an attack.

In the discussion of the tariff (1824), he thus alluded to the then new authorities on that subject:

"In the course of this discussion I have heard, I will not say with surprise, because *nil admirari* is my motto (no doctrine that can be broached on this floor can ever hereafter excite surprise in my mind),—I have heard the names of Say, Ganilh, Adam Smith and Ricardo pronounced not only in terms, but in a tone, of sneering contempt, visionary theorists, destitute of practical wisdom, and the whole clan of Scotch and quarterly reviewers lugged in to boot.

"This, sir, is a sweeping clause of proscription; with



the names of Say, Smith and Ganilh I profess to be acquainted, for I, too, am versed in title-pages; but I did not expect to hear in this house a name with which I am a little further acquainted, with so little ceremony; and by whom? I leave Adam Smith to the simplicity, to the majesty and strength of his own native genius, which has canonized his name—a name which will be pronounced with veneration when not one in this house will be remembered. But one word as to Ricardo, the last mentioned of these writers—a new authority, though the grave has already closed upon him and set its seal upon his reputation. I shall speak of him in the language of a man of as great genius as this, or perhaps any age has ever produced; a man remarkable for the depth of his reflections and the acumen of his penetration. ‘I had been led,’ says this man, ‘to look into loads of books—my understanding had for too many years been intimate with severe thinkers, with logic, and the great masters of knowledge, not to be aware of the utter feebleness of the herd of modern economists. I sometimes read chapters from more recent works, or parliamentary debates.. I saw that these (ominous words!) were generally the very dregs and rinsings of the human intellect.’ (I am very glad, sir, he did not read our debates; what would he have said of yours?) ‘At length a friend sent me Mr. Ricardo’s book, and, recurring to my own prophetic anticipation of the advent of some legislator on this science, I said, Thou art the man. Wonder and curiosity had long been dead in me, yet I wondered once more. Had this profound book been really written in England during the nineteenth century? Could it be that an Englishman, and he not in academic bowers, but

oppressed by mercantile and senatorial cares, had accomplished what all the universities and a century of thought had failed to advance by one hair's breadth? All other writers had been crushed and overlaid by the enormous weight of facts and documents. Mr. Ricardo had deduced *a priori* from the understanding itself laws which first gave a ray of light into the unwieldy chaos of materials and had constructed what had been but a collection of tentative discussions, into a science of regular proportions now first standing on an eternal basis.' "

The student will not fail to notice several felicitous expressions in this passage, as well as his caustic reference to his co-legislators when he declares that not one of them will be remembered by posterity, while the names of Smith and Ricardo will be mentioned with veneration. The reader will also note the happy use of the word "clan" in speaking of the distinguished Scotchman and Scotch writings.

Closely allied to the custom of referring to historical personages to ornament a speech, is that of alluding to fictitious characters, the creatures of romance and poetry.

References of this kind serve the purpose, not only of illustrating the subject in hand, but also of presenting the speaker himself as a person well versed in literature, which we have seen is one of the requirements of good oratory. To make the allusion correct, however, great care and skill must be exhibited in the selection, whatever it may be. It is too often the case that the speaker is content

with a fancied general resemblance, whereas a minute and critical examination will reveal points not of the similarity the orator would prefer. To make the reference proper and suitable, all the bearings and relations of the character in the work quoted should receive careful attention, else a wary opponent will turn the allusion against its author. An excellent illustration of this kind is to be found in the Hayne-Webster debate, already noticed. The reference to the coalition is this: When General Jackson was first a candidate for the presidency, the election was by the House of Representatives. Mr. Clay and John Quincy Adams were candidates at the same time. These two united their forces against General Jackson and defeated him, and elected Mr. Adams. Mr. Clay, then, in an unguarded moment, took the office of Secretary of State under Mr. Adams, and General Jackson's friend raised the cry of a corrupt bargain and sale; that is, that Mr. Clay "sold out," to use a current expression, to Mr. Adams. Of course there was no such sale, but the cry served an important party purpose, and clung to Mr. Clay during his life.

At the next election Jackson was elected, and thus the coalition ended. Mr. Webster and his friends were opposed to General Jackson, and were partisans of Mr. Clay. Hence the allusion to the matter by Mr. Hayne. On this point Mr. Webster said:—

"But, sir, the coalition! the coalition! the murdered coalition! The gentleman asks if I were led or fright-

ened into this debate by the specter of the coalition. 'Was it the ghost of the murdered coalition,' he exclaims, 'which haunted the gentleman from Massachusetts, and which, like the ghost of Banquo, would never down?' The murdered coalition! Sir, this charge of a coalition with reference to the late administration is not original with the honorable member. It did not spring up in the Senate. Whether as a fact, an argument or an embellishment, it is all borrowed. He adopts it, indeed, from a very low origin, and a still lower present condition. It is one of the thousand calumnies with which the press teemed during an excited political canvas. It was a charge of which there was not only no proof or probability but which was in itself wholly impossible to be true. No man of common information ever believed a syllable of it, yet it was of that class of falsehoods which, by continued repetition through all the organs of detraction and abuse, are capable of misleading those who are already far misled and of further fanning passions already kindling into flame. Doubtless, it served its day, and in a greater or less degree the end designed by it. Having done that, it has sunk into the general mass of state and loathsome calumnies. It is the very cast-off slough of a polluted and shameless press. Incapable of further mischief, it lies in the sewer, lifeless and despised.

"It is not, sir, in the power of the honorable member to give it dignity and decency by attempting to elevate it and introduce it into the Senate. He cannot change it from what it is—an object of general disgust and scorn. On the contrary, the contact, if he choose to touch it, is merely to drag him down to the place where it lies itself.

"But, sir, the honorable member was not, for other reasons, entirely happy in the allusion to Banquo's ghost. It was not, I think, the friends, but the enemies of the murdered Banquo, at whose bidding his spirit would not down. The honorable gentleman is fresh in his reading of the English classics, and can put me right, if I am wrong; but, according to my poor recollection, it was at those who had begun with caresses and ended with foul and treacherous murder, that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out, 'A ghost!' It made itself visible in the right quarter and compelled the guilty and conscience-stricken and none others to start, with:—

'Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!  
If I stand here, I saw him.'

Their eyeballs were seared: was it not so, sir? who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their own hand and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness, who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward conscience by circulating, through white lips and chattering teeth, 'Thou canst not say I did it.' I have misread the great poet if it was those who had no way partaken in the deed of the death, who either found that they were, or feared that they should be, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or who cried out to a specter created by their own fears and their own remorse, 'Avaunt, and quit our sight!'

"There is another particular resemblance, sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblances

might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo, making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant contemplation. Those who murdered Banquo, what did they win by it? substantial good, permanent power, or disappointment, rather, and sore mortification—dust and ashes—the common fate of vaulting ambition overleaping itself? Did not even-handed Justice ere long commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had ‘filed their mind;’ that their ambition, though for the moment successful, had but put a barren scepter in their grasp? Aye, sir—

‘A barren scepter in their gripe,  
There to be wrenched by an unlineal hand,  
No son of theirs succeeding.’

“Sir, I need pursue the allusion no further. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied though the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said I am satisfied also—but that I shall think of, yes, sir, I will think of that.”

This extract will further illustrate some of the suggestions we made when we were speaking of the general principles of oratory.

It will be remembered that we endeavored to impress on the mind of the student the necessity of a good knowledge of the structure of the English language, its vocabulary, synonyms, figures, and so on. This appears from this selection. The term

"ghost" is alluded to as a "spirit," and as a "specter." He speaks, also, of "substantial good" and "permanent power."

These are excellent specimens of synonyms, or synonymous expressions. They prevent stale repetition and show careful thought. Then the manner of dealing with the Shakesperian allusion to Banquo's ghost is the finest specimen of that species of argumentation in our or any other tongue.

He draws out the figure with a degree of accuracy and vividness that is striking. His opponent simply alluded to the play, as is done almost every day, without thinking of the connection and relations of the parts and characters of the drama. He pointed to the ghost, but Mr. Webster calls the specter up himself, and by the magic and skill of his art causes it to pass in front of his adversary, shaking its gory locks at him.

It makes considerable difference in what connection a fine expression is made by a poet, whether it be addressed to friends or enemies, inferiors or superiors. The average speaker is usually content with the language alone; he makes it suit all occasions, which is an utterly unreasonable and fallacious conception of its office. This cannot be better illustrated than by commending the quoted passages to the attention of the student. See that you do not get caught in a similar trap. Shakespeare being the subject of reference, Mr. Webster draws further on him and on the same play, especially where he

alludes to commending the "poisoned chalice" to the lips of his enemies. The way, also, he treats the subject of the "coalition," which was nothing more than what we now term a "campaign lie," is deserving of careful study. He makes everything out of it that it was possible to be made. He throws ridicule upon the matter itself, but shows his greatest skill in attacking its origin, and suggests that that which has a low origin must be low itself, and any allusion to it, any attempt to clothe it with respectability, will simply tarnish him who tries it. This thought, or, rather, this great truth, should be laid away by the reader, for he will have ample use for it in his career. The student will also see, we think, the better command Mr. Webster has of his subject. He is better poised and balanced. This comes from his excellent training and his greater mental resources, developed by laborious study. Were he not perfectly familiar with Shakesperian literature, for instance, could he ever have turned the "ghost" allusion to such excellent account? It would simply be impossible. Superior eloquence, it will be found the more we investigate the subject, comes from superior knowledge and superior skill. Without knowledge as well as skill it cannot be attained.

One of the finest examples of highly-adorned yet graceful and elegant description, replete with bold metaphor and magnificent allusions, is found in the address of E. D. Baker, of Oregon, delivered in



San Francisco, on the completion of the first submarine cable. At the time of the speech there was a "blazing comet" in the sky and the great orator thus interwove it in his address:—

"But even while we assemble to mark the deed and rejoice at its completion, the Almighty, as if to impress us with our weakness, when compared with his power, has set a new signal of his reign in heaven. If to-night, fellow-citizens, you will look out from the glare of your illuminated city into the northwestern heavens, you will perceive, low down on the edge of the horizon, a bright stranger pursuing its path across the sky. Amid the starry hosts that keep their watch, it shines, attended by a brighter pomp and followed by a broader train. No living man has gazed upon its splendors before. No watchful votary of science has traced its course for nearly ten generations. It is more than three hundred years since its approach was visible from our planet. When last it came, it startled an emperor on his throne, and while the superstition of his age taught him to perceive in its presence a herald and a doom, his pride saw in its flaming course and fiery train the announcement that his own light was about to be extinguished.

"In common with the lowest of his subjects, he read omens of destruction in the baleful heavens, and prepared himself for a fate which alike awaits the mightiest and the meanest. Thanks to the present condition of scientific knowledge, we read the heavens with a far clearer perception. We see in the predicted return of the rushing, blazing comet through the sky, the march of a heavenly messenger along its appointed way, and

around its predestined orbit. For three hundred years he has traveled amid the regions of infinite space. Lone, wandering, but not lost, he has left behind him shining suns, blazing stars, and gleaming constellations; now nearer the eternal throne, and again on the confines of the universe, he returns, with visage radiant and benign; he returns with unimpeded march and unobstructed way; he returns, the majestic, swift, electric telegraph of the Almighty, bearing upon his flaming front the tidings that throughout the universe there is still peace and order; that amid the immeasurable dominions of the great King, His rule is still perfect; that suns and stars and systems tread their endless circle and obey the eternal law."

The practice of alluding to the creations of the imagination of the poet and the dramatist, and of borrowing freely from their best-known efforts to more fully explain and embellish the theme, is quite common, we might almost say universal. Like almost every grace of speech, it is liable to be carried to excess. The principal aim of the speaker should be to express his own thoughts in his own language; that is, in language which has been chosen according to the precepts herein laid down. The diligent pursuit of this object will soon develop into a habit, and the result in the end will be to leave the speaker in the command of a good vocabulary of his own. One of the main objections to the use of quotations and poetical allusions lies in the fact that the general reader is but little familiar with the great poets and

dramatists. His knowledge is usually of the most general nature, and this very want of knowledge raises suspicion in his mind as to the genuineness of the allusions. The passages, too, which are frequently quoted are mostly of the very highest type of excellence and for that reason above the general plane of the speech, which should possess a general uniformity in style and treatment. We would suggest, therefore, that selections should be brief and completely in point, and, above all, of passages that are perfectly familiar to the average intelligence, so that the allusion or quotation will be immediately understood. This is in accordance with the rule laid down by Cicero, viz., that we should speak from the common experience of life; that is, draw our language from sources ordinarily frequented by the mass of mankind. The proper use of allusion and quotation should be to develop more fully the thought of the speaker, by bringing it nearer to, instead of farther from, the comprehension of the hearer. The study of literature should not be for the purpose of drawing wholesale from its treasures when we are unable to fill the demand of the market, but to aid us in developing our own powers, by acquainting us with the use of literary tools and appliances. Let the allusion be pointed and the quotation short, resembling, rather, the scattering of flowers and garlands than the planting of entire gardens. The imaginative element should pervade the whole discourse like the fluids of the system

throughout the body, instead of being collected in one place and for one detached purpose.

We think this view is fully sustained by an examination of the great speeches of the world. We find few, if any, quotations in Clay, Chatham, Webster, Baker, or Prentiss. Burke particularly drew on his own imagination, and surpassed even the poet in the beauty and grandeur of his figures, in the excellence of his embellishments. There are not wanting speakers who indulge in copious extracts from the poets, but it is a practice not to be commended. The mere reference to the poetic *thought* is often much more effective than the quotation. Thus, Daniel Webster in the course of the Hayne contest said that while he might be possessed of some of that spirit that raised mortals to the skies, he yet possessed none of that other spirit which would drag angels down. This idea is taken from Dryden in his ode on Alexander's feast, and the reference to the thought is much better even than to have used the quotation.

## CHAPTER V.

BEGINNING A SPEECH.—EXAMPLES FROM CELEBRATED  
SPEECHES.—WEBSTER.—LINCOLN.—CICERO.

THE trite saying that “a bad beginning makes a good ending,” finds no support in the art of the orator. On the contrary, nothing adds so much to the point, pith, and effect of a speech as a good opening. It is this part of the effort which rivets the attention of the audience, and if the impression then made be favorable, it will go far towards securing the success and general reception of the whole.

That there should be a suitable exordium, introduction or preamble to the discourse is conceded by the greatest masters of the art, and examples are very numerous showing its necessity in actual experience. All great speeches are prefaced with some general observations showing either the speaker's appreciation of the solemnity of the occasion, the interest of the subject, or forecasting the line of argument to be pursued. Cicero not inaptly compares the preface of a speech to the portico of a temple or building. To carry the simile a little farther, it might be added that as the extent of the porch depends much upon the country in which the edifice is to be erected, so the limits of the intro-

duction to a speech will depend upon the temperament of the audience to be addressed. An earnest and eager assembly will demand an immediate entrance upon the theme, while a not over-zealous auditory may be indifferent as to the proportions of the introduction.

When a subject has been handled by a preceding speaker, who has, intentionally or otherwise, traveled over a wide extent of territory in the course of his argument, and touched upon a great variety of subjects, the minds of the listeners, in following the speaker, naturally lose sight of the original matter of discussion. They take their cue from the orator, and, not knowing the drift of the address beforehand, involuntarily follow wherever he leads. The most natural and proper course for the subsequent speaker to pursue is to recall their minds to the matter in hand, bring them back to the place whence they started, and show them when and where the errors of the prior disputant arose. We cannot better explain this matter than by giving the opening of the speech of Daniel Webster in his famous reply to Hayne, in the United States Senate, January 27, 1830, from which we have had to draw quite freely. Mr. Webster began as follows:—

“When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude and ascertain how far the elements have driven him from his true course.

Let us imitate this prudence, and before we float farther refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are."

In like manner where a certain subject has been much discussed, as, for instance, that of slavery in this country just previous to the Civil War, then a speech might be begun the same way, even though there be no opposing adversary present. Such was the case with Abraham Lincoln in his celebrated speech at Springfield, June 9, 1858. Mr. Lincoln opened thus:—

"If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease till a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe that this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the union to be dissolved, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it and place it where the public mind will rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, north as well as south."

These will serve as samples, or guides, for the introduction of the speaker, as well as of the speech, to the audience; none better can be found. It may be remarked that they are brief, very brief indeed if we compare them with the able efforts which followed. This point should be carefully noted. It happens occasionally that a speaker will consume some very valuable time and waste a fine opportunity in telling his audience what he is going to say, instead of immediately proceeding to say it.

A good illustration of a suitable opening or introduction is to be found in the oration of Cicero in defense of a client named Aulus Cluentius Habitus. The Cluentian family had been involved in considerable litigation and domestic infelicity arising out of the machinations and ambitious designs of the mother, named Sassia. Sassia had married a man named Oppianicus, and there then arose a constant feud between Cicero's client, Cluentius, and his mother and stepfather. There were several lawsuits between them and charges of bribery were freely made. When the courts had decided one way, the other side immediately carried the matter before the people, and thus a large amount of scandal and prejudice was engendered. When the cause in which Cicero was engaged came on for trial, his first effort was to endeavor to remove this prejudice from the minds of the judges, so that they might receive an impression of the case as though it had been brought before the public for the first time. He did this in the following manner:—



“I consider, O judges, that the entire speech of the accuser may be divided into two parts, one of which seems to me very greatly to rely upon that old prejudice of the Junianian trial, and the other only for the purpose of custom to touch timidly and with diffidence the charge of the crime of poisoning, upon which law this action is grounded. Therefore I am determined to preserve this same division into prejudice and crime in the defense, in order that all may understand that I desire to conceal nothing by reticence, nor to obscure any point by unnecessary verbiage. But when I contemplate in what manner the subject must be elaborated by me on each of these points, how that that part which is the appropriate subject of your inquiring, and which comes under the law of poisoning, will require but a short and simple effort from me, but that which is very remote from the merits of the case, which is more suited to assemblies excited with sedition than to tranquil and moderate judicial investigations—when I consider these two things, I perceive with how much labor and difficulty my pleading will be attended. But in view of this difficulty I am consoled by the reflection that it is your custom so to listen to criminal charges that you demand every refutation of them by the orator; that you do not think it behooving that you should give more chances for the benefit of the accused than his defender can obtain by refuting the charges of crime and can prove by his speech.

“Concerning prejudice, moreover, you should bear in mind that I shall say nothing which you can deem unfitting to be said. In regard to the crime, the danger of Cluentius concerns himself alone, but in the case of prej-

udice the cause is common to us all, therefore it shall be my object to clear him of the crime with which he is charged by effective arguments, and to remove whatever odium there may be attached to his name, by appeals to your sense of justice. In the first instance, you must give me your earnest attention, and in the second, you must repose in me your firm confidence; for without your support, and without the support of such men as you, no one can withstand the power of public prejudice. As regards myself, I know not whither to turn. Can I deny that there was odium attached to that corrupt trial? Can I deny that the affair was agitated in public meetings, was tossed about in trials, mentioned in the Senate? Can I pluck out from the minds of men an opinion so deeply rooted, so long settled? It is not in my power to do so. It is your duty, O judges, to lend your assistance to the innocence of this man in this calamitous slander, just as you would rush to the rescue in any overwhelming conflagration.

“As in most assemblies, the truth has too little firmness and strength, here false prejudice should be utterly impotent and futile. Let it predominate in popular assemblies, but let it keep from view in important trials. Let it abound in the opinions and speeches of the ignorant, but let men of genius banish it from their minds. Let it have vehement and sudden outbursts, but when the true merits of the cause become known, let it die away, when a little time has been interposed for sober thought. In fine, let us preserve and follow that definition of a just trial which has been handed down to us by our ancestors, to wit, that in a public trial a crime should be punished without prejudice, and prejudice should be laid aside where there is no guilt.

“Wherefore, O judges, before I begin to speak of the cause itself, I ask this, which is most just, first, that you bring no prejudice here, for we shall lose not only the authority but even the name of judges unless we shall form our judgments from the causes themselves, and if we bring to trials judgments already formed at home. Finally, if you have formed any opinion in regard to this case, if reason can shake it, or if my oration can weaken it, in fine, if the force of truth can pluck it out, do not hesitate to cast it from you, freely and willingly. Moreover, when I shall speak and debate upon any single point, do not subject to too rigid a scrutiny things which may appear contradictory, but wait until the end, and allow me to preserve my order of speaking without interruption. When I make my peroration, if there is anything passed over, examine it with care.”

From this specimen we can form a good idea of his style of opening. It will be seen on close examination to bear no very distant resemblance to what we have selected from Mr. Webster. He alludes to the occasion and the difference between a great judicial trial and a popular assembly. He shows how matters which only belong to the latter should not be elevated into the former; he belittles his own ability to cope with the important occasion; he beseeches the judges to hear him with patience and allow him to preserve his own line of argument, similar in this respect to Demosthenes; he inveighs against the power of public prejudice in the same manner as Mr. Webster; he divides his subject and clearly points out the divisions.

Cicero hints in this passage at a matter of the very utmost importance to himself and his client, and one, too, of great concern to any public speaker at any time and in any cause, and that is the power of public prejudice. As we will soon take up the consideration of argumentation itself and endeavor to show from the practice of the greatest orators the methods they employed to produce conviction in the minds of those addressed, we will devote a little attention to the subject of popular prejudice—what it is, when and where it is effective to influence an audience, how it may be employed and how combated when used against you. We need not go far to find an appropriate definition. Cicero defines it as “bringing to a subject an opinion already formed.”

On the leading topics of public interest and discussion we all have preconceived notions of what is and what is not correct religious doctrine and sound political policy. What ideas are more firmly rooted in our minds, what impressions are stronger in our natures, what feelings have a firmer hold on our sympathies, than those arising out of these matters of belief? As the Roman orator said, if we bring to the consideration of these subjects opinions already formed, a trial becomes a hollow mockery, and in the same connection he implores the judges to cast all bias from their minds if reason can shake it, if eloquence dethrone it, and if truth can utterly destroy it. Thus prejudice may be of two kinds,

first against the speaker, and second against the subject of the speech.

Prejudice against the speaker is a matter that frequently causes him some annoyance. There are occasions when a corrupt and flagitious public press, by the propagation of a loathsome slander, will so inflame public passion that it will require great art and skill on the part of the speaker to remove it. Sometimes it may be kept down by words of conciliation, timely advances, or impassioned refutation. The first is, possibly, the best plan. Though the multitude is fickle and unreasoning, there are few audiences that will not yield in time to the power of the orator's skill. A pleasant anecdote, a timely appeal to their sense of fairness, will seldom fail to secure their good-will. The howling mob once frowned down Stephen A. Douglas, and even E. D. Baker, a leading orator of the Pacific Coast, was silenced by a mob. In a short while, however, reason resumed its sway over the minds of the constituents of Douglas, and Baker's magic voice before long held those men spellbound in the very city where he had been stifled before. It is necessary, therefore, to lay in a good store of patience, to use a great deal of tact, to make even eloquence effective. You must turn a smiling face to your audience even though it frown on you.

The principal stronghold of prejudice is in our preconceived notions on the very subjects we usually discuss. Nothing, of course, should be so free

from the minds of an audience, but nothing is so sure to be present. We have not to go far, however, for an explanation. If we study the state of the public mind at any period and consider its political bias, we will find that it is the result of previous education. We imbibe our religious and political convictions from our ancestors, our teachers or moral and political leaders.

Frequently our prejudices arise under a state of society which would justify them at the time, but we fail to surrender them when the conditions which gave rise to them cease to exist.

We might illustrate these statements from English history. England at one time was in favor of a protective tariff, but is now the leading free-trade nation of the world. When the members of the Cobden Club began to promulgate their theories, the prejudice or bias of the nation in favor of protection had to be first overcome, and this had to be done by forcible and eloquent presentations of the now accepted doctrines. Should an effort be now made to return to the former doctrine, the present economic prejudices would have to be overturned in like manner.

We might make similar remarks as to many things which have transpired in our own country.

The generality of mankind seldom study for themselves, coolly and dispassionately, the abstract right or wrong of religious, political or economic theories. These are so mixed up with their immediate wants

and interests that they are viewed, as Edmund Burke puts it, "through an adverse medium," and each of us is incased in a shell, so to speak, which, while it protects our pet hobbies, shuts out the new and therefore strange teaching.

To a limited extent this may be proper. It can scarcely be expected that a community will change its long-established convictions immediately upon hearing an eloquent harangue on principles utterly at variance with its own. Were this not so, then upon every successive speech there would be a revulsion of feeling, and the public mind would be kept oscillating like a pendulum. Prejudice, therefore, enters largely into every discussion. We want to have our pet theories sustained, those of our opponents demolished. We see some of this tendency in the speech of Mr. Hayne in his allusion to contemporaneous matters which bore but slight relation to the disposition of the public lands, and even if Mr. Webster were the aggressor, as Mr. Hayne seems to intimate, the way the former handled the question in reply gave him a decided advantage. Cicero, we see, goes right to the root of the matter at once, and by a few impassioned appeals opens the way to a favorable reception of his speech. The manner in which he does this is highly eloquent and is worthy of special notice. He makes the judges see that while his client, Cluentius, is alone concerned in the criminal charge, yet in dealing with the subject of prejudice the judges, himself, and

every one of his audience had a common interest, for there was no telling then, and there is no telling now, when a person may have to overcome a deep-seated popular bias arising from matters foreign to the question at hand. Similar remarks, it is unnecessary to say, are applicable to the questions debated between those distinguished orators, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas.

Every public question affects our immediate temporal interests, otherwise it would not be a public question at all. Life, liberty, and property are involved in such questions as the abolition or regulation of African slavery, free trade, home-rule and the like, and it is the part of the orator to be prepared to discuss them in one way or another. When we have fully satisfied ourselves that a certain line of public policy is the best, and have all our arguments marshaled, so that they defy reputation, we have the hardest task yet to perform, to push them to conviction in the minds of those who have never taken the trouble to investigate, but who may entertain directly antagonistic views. Those great and deservedly-admired fulminations of Chatham and Burke against the folly of commencing and prosecuting a war with the American colonies by the mother country, seem to have fallen on very unresponsive ears. To us they seem the finest specimens of oratory to be found in any age or time. In the force and vigor of thought, the terse, unvarnished Saxon of Chatham, the unrivaled, compact yet highly polished dic-



tion of Burke, with his great wealth of illustration and metaphor, and the keen foresight of both, which unerringly pointed to ultimate disaster and disgrace, we have models of eloquence and wisdom worthy of never-ceasing admiration and applause. /

One of the best examples of the skillful management of popular prejudice is found in one of the speeches of Lord Chatham. It is well known that the military art has a strong hold on our prejudices. The soldier, the man who bares his breast to the hazards of war, leaving behind those nearest and dearest to him, to defend against an invading foe, or to go into foreign lands to maintain the honor of his country abroad, is an object of general admiration, and even though the war be not a popular or even a just one, no one thinks of visiting the blame on him; it is something for which he is in no way responsible. But it is difficult, nay, almost impossible, to oppose a war with that vigor and earnestness with which most public and party measures are opposed, without reflecting more or less upon the unwilling, as well as the willing and active, instruments of the measure.

The American war is a case in point. Chatham was too sincere a patriot to cast any reflection upon British valor, and too good a statesman not to see the error of so doing, and at the same time he saw and predicted the failure of the undertaking. How to reconcile, therefore, the prowess of the British soldiery with their inevitable defeat in America without saying anything that

could be tortured into an excuse for his enemies to say that "the wish was father to the thought," was the problem; he said: "No man more highly esteems and honors the British troops than I do. I know their virtues and their valor; I know that they can achieve anything but *impossibilities*, and I know that the conquest of British America is an *impossibility*." This was the work of genius. On the other hand, we find a similar case, similar in its opportunities only, in the war between the United States and the Republic of Mexico. This measure was strongly opposed by some of the ablest and most patriotic statesmen the country has produced. One of this opposing party became so heated by party feeling that he quite lost his equilibrium in his denunciations of the measure, and endeavored to say something like the words of Chatham. Instead, however, he said in effect that if he were a Mexican he would welcome the American troops to inhospitable graves. The remark proved unfortunate for the speaker and his party. It violated a common and deep-seated prejudice in favor of the soldier who follows his country's flag in a foreign, though, perhaps, unjust contest. As to him all clamor should be hushed.

A few remarks might be made here in regard to the use of prejudice in public discourse if it is to be conceded that there is any place for it in any event. Yet as the speaker, like the soldier, sometimes has to avail himself of any and every weapon within

his reach for defense if not for attack, to use a club when he has lost his firearms, and as, like the soldier, he may not always have the choice of his weapons, it is well to take some notice of the question in this point of view. It may sometimes be useful to combat prejudice with prejudice. For this purpose it is well to understand the leading strings of strong popular feelings and passions, so that, though we may not wish to arouse them, we may not have them brought down on our own heads or that of our party. Little direction can be given on the subject. We can well agree with Cicero that it should be banished from all calm and deliberate councils.

Returning from this digression, let us now resume the consideration of the appropriate opening of a speech.

One of the most natural and effective things to do in this connection is to show that the orator has a due appreciation of the solemnity of the occasion or the importance of the subject.

It would manifestly be out of taste to enter upon the trial of a Hastings, for years an absolute ruler over one of the most ancient people of the earth, the cradle, in fact, of the human family, with no more feelings of awe and responsibility than we would approach the trial of an ordinary malefactor. Hence Mr. Burke, in the trial of Hastings, draws a powerful picture of the scene he was engaged in, of the audience to be moved, the crime charged, and the criminal; of the latter he said:—

“We have not brought before you an obscure offender, who, when his insignificance and weakness are weighed against the power of the prosecution, gives even to public justice something of the appearance of oppression. No, my lords, we have brought before you the first man of India, in rank, authority and station; we have brought before you the first man of the tribe, the head of the whole body of Eastern offenders, a captain-general of iniquity, under whom all the fraud, all the speculation, all the tyranny in India are embodied, disciplined, arrayed and paid. This is the person, my lords, that we bring before you. We have brought before you such a person that, if you strike at him with the firm arm of justice, you will not have need of a great many more examples. You strike at the whole corps if you strike at the head.”

Daniel Webster also makes a telling point when he alludes to the place of the debate and the appropriate conduct suited to the occasion. Mr. Hayne had taunted him with declining combat with Mr. Benton, of Missouri, who had also spoken on the same subject, and selecting him, Hayne, as the object of his attack as being a feeblor adversary. He evidently did this for a twofold reason, first, to show, if possible, that Mr. Webster did make such a choice from fear, and most of all to arouse a feeling of sympathy in his audience, or at least to break, in some slight measure, the force of Mr. Webster's attack.

We will let Mr. Hayne speak for himself, however, and this was his language:—

“The honorable gentleman from Massachusetts, after deliberating a whole night upon his course, comes into

this chamber to vindicate New England, and instead of making up his issue with the gentleman from Missouri on the charges which *he had preferred*, chose to consider me as the author of these charges, and, losing sight entirely of that gentleman, selects me as an adversary and pours out all the vials of his mighty wrath upon my devoted head. Nor is he willing to stop there; he goes on to assail the institutions and policy of the South, and calls in question the principles and conduct of the state which I have the honor to represent. When I find a gentleman of mature age and experience, of acknowledged talents and profound sagacity, pursuing a course like this, declining the contest offered from the West, and making war upon the unoffending South, I must believe, I am bound to believe, he has some object in view which he has not ventured to disclose.

“Mr. President, why is this? Has the gentleman discovered in former controversies with the gentleman from Missouri that he is overmatched by that senator? and does he hope for an easy victory over a more feeble adversary? Has the gentleman’s distempered fancy been disturbed by gloomy forebodings of new ‘alliances to be formed’ at which he hinted? Has the ghost of the murdered coalition come back, like the ghost of Banquo, to ‘sear the eyeballs of the gentleman?’ and will it not down at his bidding—the dark visions of broken hopes and honors lost forever still floating before his heated imagination? Sir, if it be his object to thrust me between the gentleman from Missouri and himself in order to rescue the East from the contest it has provoked with the West, he shall not be gratified. Sir, I will not be dragged into the defense of my friend from

Missouri. The South shall not be forced into a conflict not its own. The gentleman from Missouri is able to fight his own battles. The gallant West needs no aid from the South to repel any attack which may be made on them from any quarter. Let the gentleman from Massachusetts controvert the facts and arguments of the gentleman from Missouri—if he can—and if he win the victory, let him wear the honors; I shall not deprive him of his laurels.”

This was Mr. Webster’s reply:—

“The honorable member complained that I had slept on his speech; I must have slept on it or not slept at all. The moment the honorable member sat down, his friend from Missouri arose, and with much honeyed commendation of his speech, suggested that the impressions which it had produced were too charming and delightful to be disturbed by other sentiments or other sounds, and proposed that the Senate should adjourn. Would it have been quite amiable in me, sir, to interrupt this good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious if I could have thrust myself forward to destroy sensations thus pleasing? Was it not much better and kinder both to sleep upon them myself and allow others also the pleasure of sleeping upon them? But if it be meant that by sleeping upon his speech I took time to prepare a reply to it, it was quite a mistake; owing to other engagements, I could not employ even the interval between the adjournment of the Senate and its meeting the next morning in attention to the subject of this debate. Nevertheless, sir, the mere matter of fact is undoubtedly true, I did sleep on the gentleman’s speech,

and slept soundly, and I slept equally well on his speech of yesterday, to which I am now replying. It is quite possible that, in this respect, also, I possess some advantage over the honorable member, attributable, doubtless, to a cooler temperament on my part; for in truth I slept upon his speeches remarkably well. But the gentleman inquires why he was made the object of such a reply? Why was he singled out?

“If an attack had been made on the East, he, he assures us, did not begin it—it was the gentleman from Missouri. Sir, I answered the gentleman’s speech, because I happened to hear it, and because, also, I chose to give an answer to that speech, which, if unanswered, I thought most likely to produce injurious impressions. I did not stop to inquire who was the original drawer of the bill. I found a responsible indorser before me, and it was my purpose to hold him liable and to bring him to his just responsibility without delay. But, sir, this interrogatory of the honorable member was only introductory to another. He proceeded to ask me whether I had turned upon him in this debate from the consciousness that I should find an overmatch if I ventured on a contest with his friend from Missouri. If, sir, the honorable member, *ex gratia modestiæ*, had chosen thus to defer to his friend, and to pay him a compliment, without intentional disparagement to others, it would have been quite according to the friendly courtesies of debate, and not at all ungrateful to my own feelings. I am not one of those, sir, who esteem any tribute of regard, whether light and occasional or more serious and deliberate, which may be bestowed on others, as so much unjustly withholden from themselves. But the tone

and manner of the gentleman's question forbid me thus to interpret it. I am not at liberty to consider it as nothing more than a civility to his friend. It had an air of taunt and disparagement, a little of the loftiness of asserted superiority, which does not allow me to pass it over without notice. It was put as a question for me to answer, and so put as if it were difficult for me to answer, whether I deem the member from Missouri an overmatch for myself in debate here. It seems to me, sir, that is extraordinary language, and an extraordinary tone for the discussions of this body.

"Matches and overmatches! those terms are more applicable elsewhere than here, and fitter for other assemblies than this. Sir, the gentleman seems to forget where and what we are. This is a Senate; a Senate of equals; of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters; we acknowledge no dictators. This is a hall of mutual consultation and discussion, not an arena for the exhibition of champions. I offer myself, sir, as a match for no man; I throw the challenge of debate at no man's feet. But then, sir, since the honorable member has put the question in a manner that calls for an answer, I will give him an answer; and I tell him that, holding myself to be the humblest of the members here, I yet know nothing in the arm of his friend from Missouri, either alone or when aided by the arm of his friend from South Carolina, that need deter even me from espousing whatever opinions I may choose to espouse, from debating whenever I may choose to debate, or from speaking whatever I may see fit to say on the floor of the Senate. Sir, when uttered as matter of commendation



or compliment, I should dissent from nothing which the honorable member might say of his friend; still less do I put forth any pretensions of my own; but when put to me as a matter of taunt, I throw it back, and say to the gentleman that he could possibly say nothing less likely than such a comparison to wound my pride of personal character. The anger of its tone rescued the remark from intentional irony, which otherwise, probably, would have been its general acceptance. But, sir, if it be imagined that by this mutual quotation and commendation; if it be supposed that, by casting the characters of the drama, assigning to each his part,—to one the attack, to another the cry of onset,—or, if it be thought that by a loud and empty vaunt of anticipated victory any laurels are to be won here; if it be imagined, especially, that any or all these things will shake any purpose of mine, I can tell the honorable member, once for all, that he is greatly mistaken, and that he is dealing with one of whose temper and character he has yet much to learn. Sir, I shall not allow myself on this occasion—I hope on no occasion—to be betrayed into any loss of temper; but if provoked, as I trust I shall never allow myself to be, into crimination and recrimination, the honorable member may, perhaps, find that in that contest there will be blows to take as well as blows to give; that others can state comparisons as significant, at least, as his own; and that his impunity may, perhaps, demand of him whatever powers of taunt and sarcasm he may possess. I commend him to a prudent husbandry of his resources.”

As samples of skill in oratorical fencing these extracts are worthy of study. There was nothing in

the reference to Mr. Benton by Mr. Hayne particularly exceptionable, as we stated before, and as Mr. Webster himself admits, but the offense and the mistake lay in the taunt, that is, drawing attention to one's self or one's friends is foreign to the debate, and lays the offender open to rebuke. As a mere oratorical feint Mr. Webster has the decided advantage. As a matter of fact, he had as much of personal character at stake as Mr. Hayne or Mr. Benton, but, unlike them, he kept it in the background. He pressed the subject to the front, and, by exalting his compeers and alluding to himself as one of the humblest of that distinguished body, he obtained their good-will, although he was doubtless as much bent on leadership as his opponent.

## CHAPTER VI.

### STATING THE PROPOSITION TO BE DISCUSSED.—NECESSITY FOR CLEARNESS AND PRECISION.—INTERROGATION.

In all public speaking, whether religious or secular, the first matter of importance to receive the attention of the orator is to comprehend fully the proposition he is about to advocate, and to state it with clearness, accuracy and precision. When he has done this, his next care should be to adhere to it, to apply himself to its exposition, with fidelity and ability. This latter qualification may be described by using a term borrowed from religious discourses, and that is, "sticking to the text."

The proposition text or theme which the speaker lays down in his opening statement is the guide or finger post which points the way he is about to travel, and if he turns aside from the route thus indicated and follows every by-way not in the direct line of his march, he, among other faults, wastes those efforts which the audience has a right to expect will be devoted to the elucidation of matters upon which they desire to be informed. No orator has a lien on the attention of his hearers. On the other hand, in times of political agitation and commotion, there are certain subjects in which most intelligent

men have an interest and to the proper discussion of which they will lend an attentive ear, subjects upon which they are even eager to be enlightened by those who are able to discourse upon them with intelligence and ability. In deliberative legislative bodies this may be said to be always the case, and the speaker, if well prepared and qualified, will obtain a careful hearing, until he shows himself unfitted to cope with the subject or is overwhelmed by an opposing adversary.

It is of prime importance, therefore, that he should have a clear idea of the subject he wishes to discuss, the cause he desires to advance, and know beforehand what propositions, affecting either foreign or domestic policy, he is prepared to maintain. When he has a clear conception of this subject matter, its statement should be equally so.

There is a wide field here for a discriminating judgment. A speaker may make his language so general as to cover an infinite variety of subjects, thus creating for himself an unbounded license to speak on almost everything. However useful this plan might be in affording him an opportunity to "air his eloquence," as the term is, it is attended with the disadvantage of leaving the minds of his hearers in a confused and uncertain state, with a smattering of a variety of topics without a well-defined notion of any.

The reverse of this is much better, to confine the argument to one well-cut proposition, and bring to

bear upon it all the accessories of oratory that it is capable of receiving. To use an optical illustration, he should rather make it the focus of his intellectual telescope, and concentrate upon it all the rays of his intelligence that he can collect. He can thus produce a magnified image of one object instead of a blurred and faint picture of many.

This is well illustrated in the celebrated debate between Mr. Hayne and Mr. Webster, to which we have frequently had occasion to refer. The discussion started upon what is usually one of the least exciting subjects connected with the government, the sale of the public land. Mr. Foote, a senator from Connecticut, had introduced a resolution in the Senate in the following language:—

“*Resolved*, That the committee on public lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of the public lands remaining unsold within each state and territory, and whether it be expedient to limit, for a certain period, the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale, and are now offered for sale, and are now subject to entry at the minimum price, and also whether the office of surveyor-general, and some of the land offices, may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sales and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands.”

With only this slender plank to stand on, Mr. Hayne launched forth into the question of State Rights, the relative patriotism of different sections

of the Union, and, in fact, almost every question which has been of burning interest in American politics from that day to this.

Mr. Webster, therefore, called for the reading of this resolution to find his bearings, so to speak, and then said:—

“We have thus heard, sir, what the resolution is which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech running through two days, by which the Senate has been now entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present, everything general or local, whether belonging to national politics or party politics, seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member’s attention save only the resolution before us. He has spoken about everything but the public lands. They have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not even paid the cold respect of a passing glance.”

All through this debate Mr. Webster is peculiarly careful to lay down with exactness the relative positions occupied by himself and his opponent on each subject of controversy. Thus, on the question of the attitude of the East and the South towards the settlement of the West, as indicated by the land policy of the general government, he said:—

“The real question between me and him is, Where has the doctrine been advanced at the South or the East that the population of the West should be retarded, or,

at least, need not be hastened on account of its effect to drain off the people from the Atlantic states? Is this doctrine, as has been alleged, of Eastern origin? *That is the question.*"

This is a very excellent and instructive example of what every speaker should do, constantly ask himself what is the question in dispute, for if there be no difference between himself and his adversary arising out of any subject, then there is no ground of controversy, and any time spent in raising imaginary or illusory contentions is a waste of time and energy. It is setting up a "man of straw," the demolishing of which brings no credit to the debater.

In the course of the discussion, Mr. Webster takes up another branch of the subject, first laying down clearly the lines which divide himself and Mr. Hayne, and then proceeding to present his arguments for his side, thus:—

"We approach at length, sir, to a more important part of the honorable gentleman's observations. Since it does not accord with my views of justice and policy to vote away the public lands altogether, as mere matter of gratuity, I am asked by the honorable gentleman on what ground it is that I consent to give them away in particular instances. How, he inquires, do I reconcile with these professed sentiments my support of measures appropriating portions of the lands to particular roads, particular canals, particular rivers, and particular institutions of education in the West? This leads, sir, to the real and wide difference in political opinions between the

honored gentleman and myself. On my part, I look upon all these objects as connected with the common good, fairly embraced in the objects and its terms; he, on the contrary, deems them all, if good at all, only local good. This is our difference. The interrogatory which he proceeded to put at once explains this difference. 'What interest, asks he, has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio?' Sir, this very question is full of significance. It develops the gentleman's whole political system, and its answer explains mine. Here we differ *toto cælo*. I look upon a road over the Alleghany, a canal around the falls of the Ohio, or a canal or railway from the Atlantic to the Western waters, as being objects large and extensive enough to be fairly said to be for the common benefit. The gentleman thinks otherwise, and this is the key to open his construction of the powers of the government. He may well ask, upon his system, What interest has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio? On that system, it is true, she has no interest. On that system, Ohio and Carolina are different governments and different countries, connected here, it is true, by some slight and ill-defined bond of union, but in all main respects separate and diverse."

This quality of stating and constantly keeping before the minds of your hearers the point or points of the discussion is peculiarly necessary in debate. Here the tendency usually is to fly the track. The surroundings, the excitement of the contest, the anxiety to excel, the difficulty of getting the mind free from all controlling influences, have a tendency to draw the speaker from the real point at issue,



and last, but not least, the importance of keeping up a *continuous* argument, free from awkward pauses, compels him to speak right on by seizing upon what comes uppermost in his mind, though not germane, to the subject. But these circumstances, instead of excusing empty generalizations and unnecessary rhetorical flights and incursions into other fields of inquiry, do not excuse the debater. The laws of good speaking unqualifiedly condemn this course, and though in many cases it may pass unnoticed, and result in no serious consequences, still it is always in the power of your adversary to call you to strict account. There may, possibly, be one argument in favor of the plan here denounced, and that is to draw your opponent off from the true issue in dispute, and he may be so unwary as to follow; but in oratory, as in warfare, it is not safe to presume too much on the ignorance or weakness of your enemy; he may be simply watching a favorable opportunity to overwhelm you.

While great care should be exercised in laying down the line of distinction between the position you hold and that which you claim is held by your adversary, making it broad and clear, at the same time caution should be taken not to make it too fine.

The audience will usually appreciate the strong and bold declarations of the speaker, which leave something for them to fill up at leisure, but the more delicate refinements, which to a sophist or

casuist may be matter of admiration, they will be slow to comprehend. The average intelligence which an orator is generally called upon to move and enlighten, seldom deals in the delicate shades of thought and action which may sometimes have a charm for those who excel in rhetorical accomplishments. When the speaker has presented his main arguments, therefore, even though he may be able to amplify and elaborate them with finished delicacy and refinement, it is not generally advisable to do so at the expense of wearying his audience and trying their patience with fine-spun declamation.

This was one of the faults of Edmund Burke. His wonderful genius in inventing elegant metaphors disposed him to dwell on refinements which ordinary minds were unable to grasp and follow, and he often created impatience where he intended to afford delight. His speeches, when read in quiet, excited feelings of admiration which were not experienced by those who heard them, and elicited the oft-quoted remark of the poet Goldsmith, that—

“\* \* \* \* \* He went on refining  
And thought of convincing when they thought of dining.”

Daniel Webster, on the other hand, saw and appreciated the truth of the remarks here made on this subject, and it may be perceived all through the Hayne debate that he left many things for his opponent and his friends to think of at their leisure instead of dwelling upon them himself. Thus, in

the course of his remarks, he said, in regard to the allusion to Banquo's ghost:—

“Sir, I need pursue the allusion no further. I leave the honorable member to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied though the parallel be entirely completed, I had almost said, I am satisfied also—but that I shall think of. Yes, sir, I will think of that.”

Feeling some of the advantage he had gained in his management of the Shakesperian allusion, he pursued it no further than was necessary to his argument; if there was anything more that could be said on the subject, he left it to his hearers to supply; he followed a very sound maxim in “letting well enough alone.”

Where, in the course of a debate, a speaker desires to compel his opponent to come directly to the point at issue, a very effectual way of accomplishing this object is to frame questions which call for a direct positive or negative answer. From interrogatories of this kind there is simply no escape, and any avoidance or subterfuge only weakens the opposing side. This was the method employed by Socrates in his contests with the Athenian sophists, and he used it with so much skill and effect that it took its name from that great philosopher and has become known as the “Socratic Method.”

The art of disputation was cultivated to such an

extent by certain Greek philosophers that the discussion of great moral, political and economic questions became a field for the exercise of the linguistic powers of the disputants and not a means of the discovery of truth itself. The object of the inquiry was lost sight of in the eagerness of the debaters to surpass one another in the art of dialectics, and the latter became the chief object of the participants. As Cicero puts it, they sought for victory and not for truth, which is the only legitimate aim of any controversy.

What the Socratic system did for philosophy it may be made to accomplish for political and other forensic discussion. It was employed with great effect in one of the most important political controversies of modern times, that between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, during their contest for the United States Senate, in the latter part of the year 1858.

As we have already stated, in debates in general there is a very great tendency to branch off into a great variety of subjects, so numerous are the questions which crowd on the mind of the speaker and such are the strong passions aroused in a popular election. Much of this disappears when, instead of allowing the discussion to be unrestrained and trusting to your opponent's sense of fairness, you formulate the questions upon which you desire a categorical answer. In this debate this method was invoked by both these great orators with fine effect.

The absorbing topic in those days was the restriction of slavery in the United States. Did the power of exclusion rest with Congress or with the people of a state or territory? Mr. Lincoln held to the former proposition and Mr. Douglas to the latter. The Supreme Court about this time had decided, in the case of a negro named Dred Scott, that no power existed anywhere to exclude slavery from United States territory, and Lincoln claimed that this decision virtually disposed of Mr. Douglas' favorite theory that the people of a territory had a right so to exclude it. The latter, on the other hand, claimed that this decision equally upset the doctrine of the opponents of slavery, who were pledged to oppose the admission of new slave states, or to the acquisition of new territory, without regard to its effect on the slavery question. Upon these hypotheses the questions propounded to each other by these speakers were framed.

In the first joint debate at Ottawa Judge Douglas proposed these questions to Mr. Lincoln:—

“I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln to-day stands as he did in 1854, in favor of the unconditional repeal of the Fugitive Slave law.

“I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to-day, as he did in 1854, against the admission of any more slave states into the Union, even if the people want them.

“I want to know whether he stands pledged against the admission of a new state into the Union with such

a constitution as the people of that state may see fit to make.

"I want to know whether he stands to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

"I desire him to answer whether he stands pledged to the prohibition of the slave trade between the different states.

"I desire to know whether he stands pledged to prohibit slavery in all the territories of the United States, north as well as south of the Missouri Compromise line.

"I desire him to answer whether he is opposed to the acquisition of any more territory unless slavery is prohibited therein."

The object of these interrogatories is stated by the judge as follows:—

"I want his answers to these questions. I ask Abraham Lincoln to answer these questions in order that when I trot him down to lower Egypt I may put the same questions to him. My principles are the same everywhere. I can proclaim them alike in the North, the South, the East and the West. My principles will apply wherever the Constitution prevails and the American flag waves. I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln's principles will bear transplanting from Ottawa to Jonesboro? I put these questions to him to-day distinctly, and ask an answer. I have a right to an answer, for I quote from the platform of the Republican party, made by himself and others at the time that party was formed, and the bargain made by Lincoln to dissolve and kill the old Whig party, and transfer its members, bound hand and foot, to the Abolition party under the direction of Giddings and Fred Douglas."

These questions Mr. Lincoln answered as follows:—

“I do not now nor ever did stand pledged against the admission of any more slave states into the Union.

“I do not stand pledged against the admission of a new state into the Union with such a constitution as the people of that state may see fit to make.

“I do not stand to-day pledged to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

“I do not stand pledged to the prohibition of the slave trade between the different states.

“I am impliedly, if not expressly, pledged to a belief in the right and duty of Congress to prohibit slavery in all the United States territories.

“I am not generally opposed to honest acquisition of territory; and in any given case, I would or would not oppose such acquisition, accordingly as I might think such acquisition would or would not aggravate the slavery question among ourselves.”

He then explained his answers more at length, disclaiming any intention to “hang upon the exact form of the interrogatory.” He then proceeded to propound four interrogatories to Judge Douglas, as follows:—

“If the people of Kansas shall, by means entirely unobjectionable in all other respects, adopt a State constitution and ask admission into the Union, under it, *before* they have the requisite number of inhabitants, according to the English bill—some ninety-three thousand—will you vote to admit them?

“Can the people of a United States territory in any

lawful manner, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a state constitution?

"If the Supreme Court of the United States shall decide that states cannot exclude slavery from their limits, are you in favor of acquiescing in adopting and following such decision as a rule of political action?

"Are you in favor of acquiring additional territory in disregard of how such acquisition may affect the nation on the question of slavery?"

These questions Mr. Douglas answered as follows:

"In reference to Kansas, it is my opinion that, as she has population enough to constitute a slave state, she has people enough for a free state; therefore I answer at once that, it having been decided that Kansas has people enough for a slave state, I hold that she has enough for a free state. I hope Mr. Lincoln is satisfied with my answer; and now I would like to get his answer to his own interrogatory—whether or not he will vote to admit Kansas before she has the requisite population?

"The next question propounded to me by Mr. Lincoln is, Can the people of a territory in any lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a state constitution? I answer emphatically, as Mr. Lincoln has heard me answer from every stump in Illinois, that in my opinion the people of a territory can, by lawful means, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a state constitution.

"The third question which Mr. Lincoln presented is, If the Supreme Court of the United States shall decide that a state of this Union cannot exclude slavery from



its own limits, will I submit to it? I am amazed that Mr. Lincoln should ask such a question. Mr. Lincoln's object is to cast an imputation upon the Supreme Court. He knows that there never was but one man in America claiming any degree of intelligence or decency who ever for one moment pretended such a thing. He might as well ask me, suppose Mr. Lincoln should steal a horse, would I sanction it; and it would be as genteel in me to ask him, in the event he stole a horse, what ought to be done with him.

"Are you [addressing Mr. Lincoln] opposed to the acquisition of any more territory, under any circumstances, unless slavery is prohibited in it? That he does not like to answer. When I ask him whether he stands up to that article in the platform of his party, he turns, Yankee fashion, and, without answering it, asks me whether I am in favor of acquiring territory without regard to how it may affect the Union on the slavery question. I answer that, whenever it becomes necessary, in our growth and progress, to acquire more territory, I am in favor of it, without reference to the question of slavery, and when we have acquired it, I will leave the people free to do as they please, either to make it slave or free territory as they prefer."

No better examples are needed or could be found to illustrate the efficacy of interrogatories in drawing the attention of your adversary to the main issues in debate and holding him strictly to them. In the selections here given events fully showed their vital importance; while the answer of Douglas to Lincoln's second question drove from him the peo-

ple of the South in his race for the presidency in 1860, the answer of Lincoln to Douglas' sixth allied him so closely to the antislavery or abolition sentiment that his election was the forerunner of the American Civil War, the greatest conflict of modern times.

## CHAPTER VII.

ORDER AND ARRANGEMENT.—WIT.—HUMOR —RIDICULE.—SARCASM.—IRONY.—INVECTIVE.

WHEN the speaker has collected his arguments, prepared his thoughts and ideas, his next care should be to adopt a suitable order and arrangement for their presentation.

It would be difficult to lay down an inflexible rule on this subject. It must in the main be left to the good sense and judgment of the orator himself. This was the opinion of Cicero. His judgment was doubtless based on the almost infinite variety of oratorical power. The speaker may be called upon to denounce and expose some secret danger to the State, when the vehemence of his action will more than offset a faulty arrangement, as in the case of the Catilinian orations; he may be summoned to arouse some strong political passion, where the earnestness of his manner will more than compensate a slight defect in the marshaling of his arguments; or, as in the case of most jury speeches, the interest and excitement of the contest will more than excuse a deviation from a fixed method when the speaker shows animation and fervor. The flexibility of language, too, goes far to aid a loose and

disconnected presentation of a subject. If there are points of great brilliancy, they will hide defects in the plan, for the most perfect collating of thoughts, when considered from a merely logical standpoint, will make but a weak impression on an audience if the manner of delivery be faulty and the speech be lacking in force, vigor and earnestness.

But while no invariable rule can be laid down with reference to a proper order and arrangement, and while in some cases a loose method may be adopted, it should not be supposed that utter negligence in this respect should characterize any oratorical effort. In calm, judicial, deliberative bodies the effect of a speech will very largely depend on a clear collocation of topics, while in tumultuous assemblies a like quality will by no means be without good results; in the former class of speaking, order is indispensable, while in the latter, the most that can be said is that its absence may be excused.

One rule which can be laid down for all public speaking is that the several topics or subjects upon which the orator is to speak, should be separately stated, treated, and considered, and each topic should be concluded before another is taken up. We think this rule of great importance, and one that can be followed without much difficulty. Thus, if the speaker is called upon to discuss the advantage of a certain public measure, it will almost always be found convenient to treat of it under some such heads as its importance, its justice, and its necessity,

or, what may be still better, its importance, its necessity, and its justice, and then distribute the arguments under each head where they belong. For instance, in dealing with the necessity of a measure, we should hold back such points as relate to its justice, morally considered, until that head be reached.

To illustrate, William Pitt, in his speech against the African slave trade, devotes the first part of his argument to the explanation of the expediency of abolishing the traffic, and the latter to its justice.

So where, in dealing with certain topics which bear upon some general subject, each should be touched upon separately.

For instance, in the Webster-Hayne contest, the general drift of both contestants was as to the respective patriotism of the people of the North and the South in their devotion to the Union, as displayed in the attitude of the statesmen of each section on the question of the tariff, the sale of public lands, and internal improvements, all centering on the nature of the general government.

A nice question here presents itself, and that is, in what order these minor topics should be presented. A general answer to this question may be readily given, and that is, they should be treated of in the order of their relative importance, the most important being considered last. What the most important topic is must depend upon the occasion and the nature of the subject, and rests with the judg-

ment of the speaker. Daniel Webster, in his speech, took up his side of the Hayne controversy in this order: first, reply to general remarks and allusions of Mr. Hayne outside of the debate; second, the slavery question; third, the land and internal improvement question; fourth, the tariff; and fifth, the nature of the general government as to whether the bond of union was close and strong or loose and weak, and closes with the well-known remarks on the Union. In this arrangement of his topics Mr. Webster followed the plan we have suggested, as, entering on the fifth and last head, he said, "There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty which I feel to be devolved on me by this occasion," and he then proceeds to state his views on the nature of the American Union. Thus it appears he purposely kept back the most important matter till the end, one advantage of which was it gave him an opportunity to deliver his prophet misgivings, commencing with, "When my eyes shall be turned to behold," etc.

While the necessity of dividing and distributing the various topics which will usually have to be touched upon in the course of an address cannot be too forcibly impressed on the learner's mind, it should be remembered that these divisions should appear to be those demanded by the nature of the subject itself, and not a mere formal and arbitrary arrangement, resembling the branches of a tree more than the

mechanical joining of joists and timbers, by mortising and nailing. Thus if a speaker concludes to consider a public measure under three or four heads, it would be quite stiff and formal for him to state beforehand that he would consider, first, such a point; second, such another, and then, during the speech, take them up in a similar manner, telling the audience when he finished one and commenced another. The divisions should be natural and the treatment equally so. The speaker should bear in mind that the faculties of his audience are at work as well as his own, and they will follow him if he can keep up the interest, without being told in so many words where one road ends and another begins. This they can see for themselves.

As events in human affairs have generally some connection with each other, one standing as cause and another as effect, the aim of the speaker should be to trace and place them in a similar order. But what is a cause and what is effect are precisely the questions upon which all have some opinion, but upon which few agree, and where a certain line of public policy is under consideration, as in most legislative bodies, the views which are taken of events past and to come are almost as varied as the shades of thought itself. One will begin with one circumstance as a starting-point, another will take a different event, and so on; by much the greater number, however, will start in with certain pet theories, and bend every fact in history to uphold their pecul-



iar views, and throw aside as worthless all such as do not yield to their purpose. In this manner the arrangement of thoughts, topics and ideas, and matters of time, place and purpose, have more significance than the mere convenience of the speaker or audience; it goes to the very gist of the argument itself. It was on this theory, doubtless, that Æschines, in his contest with Demosthenes, insisted that the latter should adopt and follow his (Æschine's) line of argument, and it was, no doubt, on the same theory that Demosthenes declined to do so, but substituted a different order of treatment. It may be likened to the grouping in a picture, which may vary with the mind of the artist.

While the speaker may reject the plan of his adversary in arranging his topics, it is by no means always advisable to do so. If your opponent offers you combat on favorable terms, it is the better policy to accept it; you will then, if successful, have the additional credit of beating him on his own ground. But before doing this you should be sure of the victory. Thus, in the oration for Cluentius, Cicero's opponent apparently mixed up popular clamor and prejudice with the true merits of the case. Cicero, in his opening, announced to the judges that he would observe the same division but treat of each *separately*. His adversary adopted the plan so as to bring the prejudice arising from a previous trial into the case, and Cicero adopted it so as to separate it, and keep it *out*.



Again, if your opponent proposes that you answer certain questions in a certain way, or give time, place or purpose of certain measures or events, it has a good effect to answer and give them in exactly that way. If done with skill, it will redound to your credit. It will show you are not disposed to dodge the issue. For example, in the Hayne-Webster debate, the former wished to know "why, when and how New England votes were found going for measures favorable to the West." On this point Mr. Webster said: "Sir, to these questions retort would be justified; and it is both cogent and at hand. Nevertheless, I will answer the inquiry, not by retort but by facts. I will tell the gentleman *when* and *how* and *why* New England has supported measures favorable to the West."

Cicero makes some suggestions as to the arrangement of topics and arguments which are worthy of notice. He thinks it a fault to place weak arguments first, and, by analogy, he also criticises the custom of allowing the less eloquent speakers to begin, and the more able and eloquent advocates to close a discussion, where, as is usually the case in important arguments, several speakers appear on each side—a practice which, by the way, he condemns also, and we think very justly. Both of these propositions deserve attention. As to the placing of strong points first, he doubtless wishes to be understood that really weak judgments have no place in a speech whatever. As to strong arguments, those

which all have strength and power, we think the rule already suggested in this chapter the true one, that what the speaker considers the most weighty considerations should be kept to the close.

Cicero in the same connection says that the orator should keep up the interest in his subject till the peroration. How can he better accomplish this than by arranging his arguments in a gradually ascending scale, all strong and cogent, but each new topic opening up newer and broader fields of thought, keeping up the expectation of the audience, by leading them steadily up to the point of irresistible conviction. This, as we have seen, was the plan adopted by Daniel Webster in the Hayne contest, which is by far the ablest exposition of oratorical principles of this century. This method, too, explains what is meant by *clinching an argument*, that is, at the close of a discussion, after laying down all that can be said on one side, winding up by advancing the strongest and most unanswerable arguments as *clinchers*, a term borrowed from the blacksmiths' art.

The suggestion as to the arrangement of speakers requires some notice. Such is the desire of all men who aspire to be leaders of public opinion to have themselves heard on public occasions, that in every political campaign a swarm of public speakers rush to the rostrum. By far the larger part of these tyros are but little prepared by education or special training to discuss public questions with ability and

effect. One good speech by a competent orator is worth more than all the clamor of these unfledged bantlings. Hence we suggest that the number of speakers should be curtailed in such emergencies, and only those of approved skill allowed to participate. A similar remark can be made where a number of counsel are engaged in a lawsuit. Too much speaking, even when of a high order, is not to be commended. Two counsel on each side should always be sufficient, and even one, if well prepared, should suffice. But the custom appears to exist, as it apparently did in the days of Cicero, to allow several speakers to take part in political and legal discussions, so that we have to consider, as did Cicero, in what order they should speak, whether the weaker or the stronger should appear first. The present practice seems to be to allow the less able advocate to make his address first, and this he thinks a mistake, because the first speaker has the audience fresh and expectant, when the best and strongest arguments would find the easiest reception, whereas when kept till the last the minds of the audience have lost more or less of their expectancy, and are, no doubt, weary of the subject.

There is great force in his suggestion, for the very reason he himself gives. But even here it is difficult, as it is in nearly all matters relating to oratory, to lay down an inflexible rule. In the first place, if one speaker is very inferior to another, and does not consume much time in his argument, it is

not a bad rule to allow him to speak first, as the second speaker, by his superior eloquence, will be able to make himself felt in spite of the first; but if the more able advocate speak first, the second, or succeeding ones, will receive but little attention, and very likely mar the full effect of the prior address, like an amateur who should be permitted to daub the work of an artist. Where the speakers are of equal ability, there is no question the first has the advantage.

Turning from theoretical to practical considerations, some of our greatest speeches are those which were made after a subject had been well handled and apparently exhausted by many speakers. This was true of the Hayne debate. Several Senators had made elaborate addresses upon the subject, and Mr. Hayne and Mr. Webster had each spoken before those speeches were delivered by them which have made the controversy famous. Their other efforts only made the contest more earnest; they were the advanced guard, while the succeeding efforts formed the main army.

Besides the use of good language, and clear and systematic treatment of the subject, there are many other things which enter into an oratorical effort to make it reach the minds and hearts of those addressed. Quiet humor, pointed wit, biting sarcasm, crushing irony, withering invective, derisive ridicule, all hold an important place in the speaker's art. These qualities, however, stand, as it were,

on a plane of their own. They are the characteristics of oratory that cannot be taught; they belong more to the man than to the subject. If they be wanting in him, nothing can supply their places. Rhetorical graces, finished composition, poetical and historical allusions, roundness and smoothness of sentences and periods, division of topics, arrangement of arguments, and harmony and unity of design in the theme of discussion—all these are within the province of the teacher of oratory, and many useful rules and suggestions can be presented under each of these heads. But the other qualities must exist in the individual himself. Thus, as to the mere matter of wit and ridicule, which perform an important function in almost all public speaking, especially in debate, what rules could be laid down for their appropriate use? To teach wit would probably be the dullest undertaking, and to lay down canons for ridicule would itself be ridiculous.

Wit, particularly, is a powerful weapon in the hands of an orator. It has a twofold office, either to drive home a thrust against the enemy, or to parry his trenchant and otherwise invincible blows. It must necessarily be, or seem to be, spontaneous, the natural outgrowth of some unforeseen remark or some unexpected event.

In either case it demands, above all, *readiness* on the part of the speaker. Thus we speak of "*ready wit*" and a "*quick-witted person*." In its use *delays* are not only dangerous but fatal. The or-

ator must not merely have his gun loaded, but he must be quick to aim and sure in hitting the mark, otherwise the discharge will recoil on himself.

The use of wit in a speech or in the course of a discussion are, of course, very manifest. It serves to relax the strain produced on an audience by lengthy abstract discussions; it is readily understood and more readily appreciated by every one in an audience, old as well as young; it puts every one in a good humor and prepares the way for the successful wit to launch new arguments. It may be likened to a breach in the enemies' fortifications through which the eager army can enter to victory.

A good illustration of the effect of the discussion of abstract propositions on a promiscuous audience is found in the Lincoln and Douglas debate (p. 83 of Debate), where, Mr. Lincoln having devoted considerable time to the consideration of the Dred Scott decision (which was a favorite theme with him), a man in the assemblage cried out with some impatience, "Give us something besides Dred Scott." This decision, as we shall see, was one of the points about which these great debaters made their weightiest arguments, and it was a theme of profound interest, and pregnant of results, but the audience demanded something to vary the monotony of its occurrence.

There are very few people, however, who will weary of being amused. The serious affairs of life are sufficient to keep all sober and earnest in the

pursuit of each one's allotted calling, and any flash of wit will meet a hearty and spontaneous welcome from the audience.

Many examples could be given of ready and quick repartee in the course of heated debates. From these the student could learn but little, as the occasions which called them forth in the experience of other speakers might never happen in his own. The most that can be said is that he should always be prepared, when the proper occasion occurs. In the course of the Lincoln-Douglas debate, the latter criticised very severely those who refused to lend a willing acquiescence to the Dred Scott decision, but who persisted in calling it in question in political meetings. He said such a course reminded him of the lawyer who, having lost a case in the Supreme Court, always afterward maintained that there was but one thing necessary to perfect the judicial system of Illinois, and that was to allow an appeal from the Supreme Court to a justice of the peace. To this Mr. Lincoln replied that the remark referred to was made while he, Douglas, was on the Supreme Bench. (See Douglas' speech at Chicago, Illinois, June 9, 1858.)

Closely allied to wit in its relation to oratory is humor. It probably has a better claim to the attention of the student than the former quality. On account of its need of readiness, quickness and spontaneity, wit is more adapted to conversation than to studied speech. Its flight is so rapid that

it is difficult for it to be felt at a distance. Its effects pass away too rapidly, and die with the circumstances which give rise to it. Humor, however, has many important advantages. It is capable of being prepared long beforehand and kept for future use. Thus we can prepare a humorous description of anything we see or experience, at any time, and have it ready whenever the time comes for its employment. It is not apt, either, to leave a wound, which cannot always be said of wit. Its effects are spread over a broader surface. Besides having an important office in composition humor performs good service when possessed by a speaker and employed in giving or receiving forensic blows. It is often more effective in turning the point of your adversary's blade than the most skillful declamation.

It is a curious circumstance that many of the finest speeches of Chatham, Burke, Fox and Sheridan, especially upon the American War and the Taxation of the Colonies, fell harmless. They appear to have had no more effect in directing legislation than the efforts of the merest tyro. Yet they seem to be the very inspiration of genius. One reason of this is that they were met, not by animated declamation, but by quiet humor and lively wit, on the part of the ruling minister, Lord North. When the measures of the government were assailed with all the fury which the genius of the greatest orators of the age could hurl against them, he met their



strongest arguments with a ready retort and their most flaming accusations with a smile.

One of the finest specimens of humor in our language is found in a speech of Abraham Lincoln's, where he described the part he played in the Black Hawk War. It would be a fitting record of the deeds of very many warriors who lay loud claim to bravery. He spoke as follows:—

“By the way, Mr. Speaker, did you know I was a military hero? Yes, sir, in the days of the Black Hawk War I fought, bled and came away. Speaking of General Cass' career, reminds me of my own. I was not at Sullivan's defeat, but I was about as near to it as Cass was to Hull's surrender; and, like him, I saw the place soon after. It is quite certain that I did not break my sword, for I had none to break; but I bent my musket pretty badly on one occasion. If Cass broke his sword, the idea is he broke it in desperation. I bent the musket by accident. If General Cass went in advance of me in picking whortleberries, I guess I surpassed him in charges upon the wild onions. If he saw any live fighting Indians, it was more than I did, but I had a great many bloody struggles with the mosquitoes; and although I never fainted from loss of blood, I certainly can say I was often very hungry.”

During the joint discussion in Illinois in 1858 Mr. Lincoln was carried from the platform by some of his friends; Mr. Douglas commented on this event and attributed the circumstance to the natural effect of his, Douglas', arguments on Lincoln, they

making him, Lincoln, so weak that he *had* to be carried off. Mr. Lincoln complained of this charge of Mr. Douglas, and the latter explained it thus:

"I will commence where Mr. Lincoln left off, and make a remark upon this serious complaint of his about my speech at Joliet. I did say there, in a playful manner, that when I put these questions to Mr. Lincoln at Ottawa he failed to answer, and that he trembled and had to be carried off the stand, and required seven days to get up his reply. That he did not walk off from that stand he will not deny. That when the crowd went away from the stand with me, a few persons carried him home on their shoulders and laid him down, he will admit. I wish to say to you that whenever I degrade my friends and myself by allowing them to carry me on their backs along through the public streets, when I am able to walk, I am willing to be deemed crazy." ("Joint Debate," p 131.)

Wit and humor in a speech thrown in to relax the strain and renew the interest of an audience is quite different from what are known as witty speeches, that is, those which have for their sole or main object the excitement of ridicule against a public measure or a public man. It is a kind of speaking, however, that it is dangerous to cultivate or to attempt. When an orator gets the reputation of being a "funny speaker," much of his usefulness is impaired. The business of legislature is generally of such a serious nature that most men think it must be seriously considered and any sign of levity is looked

upon with disfavor. Solemnity has ever been and probably always will be regarded as the inseparable attendant of wisdom, and laughter as the symbol of folly. Under the guise of sober reasoning, however, many stupid measures are proposed and advocated, and frequently nothing but well-directed wit and ridicule will expose hidden sophistry. When well aimed and brilliantly sustained, no weapons are more effective.

The following sample from the speech of Thomas Corwin, on the Military bill, introduced by a Mr. Crary, is one of the best examples of the witty speech in our language:—

“Now the gentleman from Michigan being a militia-general, as he told us, his brother officers, in that simple statement, have revealed the glorious history of toils, privations, sacrifices, and bloody scenes through which we know, from experience and observation, a militia officer, in time of peace, has to pass. We all, in fancy, see the gentleman from Michigan in that most dangerous and glorious event of the militia-general—a parade day. We can see the troops in motion, umbrellas, hoe and ax handles, and other deadly implements of war overshadowing all the field, when, lo! the leader of the host approaches.

‘Far off his coming shines.’

“His plume, which, after the fashion of the great Bourbon, is of ample length, reads its doleful history in the bereaved necks and bosoms of forty neighboring hen roosts. Like the great Suwaroff, he seems some-

what careless in form and point of dress, hence his epaulets may be on his shoulders, back or sides, but still gleaming gloriously in the sun. Mounted he is, too, let it not be forgotten. Need I describe to the colonels and generals of this honorable body the steed which such heroes bestride on such occasions?—No, I see the memory of other days is with you. You see before you the gentleman from Michigan, mounted on his crop-eared, bushy-tailed mare, the regular obliquities of whose hinder limbs is described by that most expressive phrase, ‘sickle hams,’ her height just fourteen hands, all told. Yes, sir, there you see his steed, that laughs at ‘the shaking of the spear,’ that is his ‘war horse whose neck is clothed with thunder.’

“We have glowing descriptions of Alexander the Great and his war horse, Bucephalus, at the head of the Macedonian phalanx, but, sir, such are the improvements of modern times that every one must see that our militia-general, with his crop-eared mare, with bushy tail and sickle ham, would literally frighten off a hundred Alexanders. But to the history of the parade day. The general, thus mounted and equipped, is in the field ready for action, on the eve of some desperate enterprise, as, giving order to shoulder arms, it may be, there occurs a crisis, one of the accidents of war, which no sagacity could prevent. A cloud rises and passes over the sun. Here an occasion occurs for the display of that greatest of all traits in the character of a commander, that trait which enables him to seize upon and turn to good account events unlooked for as they may arise. Now for the caution into which the Roman Fabius foiled the skill and courage of Hannibal. A retreat is ordered, and

troops and general in a twinkling are found *gone*, safe ensconced in a neighboring grocery. But even here the general still has room for the exhibition of heroic deeds. Hot from the field and chafed with the untoward events of the day, your general unsheathes his trenchant blade, eighteen inches in length, as you will well remember, and, with an energy and remorseless fury, he slices the watermelons that lie in heaps around him, and shares them with his surviving friends.

“Other of the sinews of war are not wanting here. Whisky, that great traveler of modern times, is here also, and the shells of the watermelons are filled to the brim. Here, again, is shown how the extremes of barbarism and civilization meet. As the Scandinavian heroes of old, after the fatigues of war, drank wine from the skulls of their slaughtered enemies in Odin’s halls, so now our militia-general and his forces, from the skulls of melons thus vanquished, in copious draughts of whisky assuage the heaving fire of their souls after the bloody scenes of parade day. But, alas! for this short-lived race of ours. All things will have an end, and so is it with the glorious achievements of our general. Time is on the wing and will not stay its flight; the sun, as if frightened at the mighty events of the day, rides down the sky, and, at the close of day, when the ‘hamlet is still,’ the curtain of night drops upon the scene.

‘And glory, like a phoenix, in its fires  
Exhales its odors, blazes, and expires.’”

Ridicule sometimes comes in good play in oratory. The example just given illustrates it completely. Mr. Crary, a representative from Iowa, introduced

a bill in Congress relating to military affairs, and in pressing the bill criticised quite freely the military career of General Harrison. In the course of his remarks he, Crary, alluded to his own experience as a general of militia. Mr. Corwin saw the situation immediately; a general of militia, whose sole knowledge of the military art was derived from the country muster in time of peace, taking upon himself the task of teaching a well-trained soldier, who had won laurels in actual warfare! The result is well shown in the speech here given.

Sarcasm has for its object the holding up to contempt and scorn the actions of men in their conduct of public or private affairs. It was the weapon employed very freely by William Pitt in that most trying period of the British nation in dealing with the actions of the French during the time when their government was under the control of Napoleon. Here is a very fair example, taken from the speech of that orator on refusing to negotiate with that ruler :—

“Such, sir, was the nature of that system. Let us examine a little farther, whether it was from the beginning intended to be acted upon in the extent I have stated. At the very moment when their threats appeared to many little else than the ravings of madmen, they were digesting and methodizing the means of execution, as accurately as if they had actually foreseen the extent to which they have since been able to realize their criminal projects. They sat down coolly to devise

the most regular and effectual mode of making the application of this system the current business of the day, and incorporating it with the general orders of their army; for (will the House believe it) this confirmation of the decrees of November 19 was accompanied by an exposition and commentary addressed to the general of every army of France, containing a schedule as coolly conceived and as methodically reduced as any by which the most quiet business of a justice of the peace or the most regular routine of any department of State in this country could be conducted. Each commander was furnished with one general blank formula of a letter, for all the nations in the world: The people of France to the people of —, greeting. We are come to expel your 'tyrants.' Even this was not all; one of the articles of the decree of the 15th of December was expressly 'that those who should show themselves so brutish and so enamored of their chains as to refuse the restoration of their rights, to renounce liberty and equality, or to preserve, recall or treat with their prince or privileged orders, were not entitled to the distinction which France in other cases had justly established between government and people, and that such a people ought to be treated according to the rigor of war and of conquest.' Here is their love of peace; here is their aversion to conquest; here is their respect for the independence of other nations!"

In the reply to this speech by the celebrated Charles James Fox we find some very fine passages of a similar character, one of which is here given:

"If a man had been present at the battle of Blenheim, for instance, and had inquired the motive of the

battle, there was not a soldier engaged who could not have satisfied his curiosity, and even, perhaps, allayed his feelings. They were fighting, they knew, to repress the uncontrolled ambition of the Grand Monarch.

“But if a man were present now at a field of slaughter, and were to inquire for what they were fighting—‘Fighting!’ would be the answer; ‘they are not fighting; they are *pausing*.’ ‘Why is that man expiring? Why is that other writhing with agony? What means this implacable fury?’ The answer must be, ‘You are quite wrong, sir, you deceive yourself—they are not fighting, do not disturb them, they are merely *pausing*! This man is not expiring with agony—that man is not dead, he is only *pausing*! Lord keep you sir! they are not angry with one another; they have no cause of quarrel; but their country thinks there should be a *pause*. All that you see, sir, is nothing like fighting—there is no harm, nor cruelty, nor bloodshed in it whatever; it is nothing more than a *political pause*; it is merely to try an experiment—to see whether Bonaparte will not behave himself better than heretofore, and, in the meantime, we have agreed to a *pause* in pure friendship!’ And is this the way, sir, that you are to show yourselves the advocates of order, to trample on religion, to stifle in the heart not merely the generosity of noble sentiment, but the affections of social nature, and in the prosecution of this system you spread terror and devastation around you?”

Irony consists in pretending to favor, uphold or advocate that which you yourself do not believe. A very beautiful example is presented in the ex-



tract from Mr. Fox' speech just given. The picture where the orator describes the field of battle where the wounded and dying fill the air with their groans, and the dead lie scattered in piles around, as not a *fight* but a *pause* is a striking and effective example of bitter irony.

Invective is strong and rapid denunciation of men or measures. It is notably exhibited in Cicero's orations against Catiline, as well as these against Marc Antony. It is well employed in those speeches which have for their object the exciting of strong feelings of hatred against an unworthy object. The following extract from a speech of Henry Grattan, the eminent Irish orator, affords an excellent illustration of withering invective:—

“You, sir [referring to Mr. Flood, his opponent], who delight to utter execrations against the American commissioners of 1778, on account of their hostility to America—you, sir, who manufacture stage thunder against Mr. Eden for his anti-American principles—you, sir, whom it pleases to chant a hymn to the immortal Hampden—you, sir, approved of the tyrannies exercised against America; and you, sir, voted four thousand Irish troops, to cut the throats of the Americans, fighting for their freedom, fighting for your freedom, fighting for the great principle, LIBERTY. But you found at last (and this should be an eternal lesson to men of your craft and cunning) that the king had only dishonored you; the court had bought but would not trust you; and, having voted for the worst measures, you remained, for seven years, the creature of salary without

the confidence of government. Mortified at the discovery, and stung by disappointment, you betake yourself to the sad expedients of duplicity. You try the sorry game of a trimmer in your progress to the acts of an incendiary. You give no honest support either to the government or to the people. You, at the most critical period of their existence, take no part; you sign no non-consumption agreement; you are no volunteer; you oppose no Perpetual Mutiny bill, no altered Sugar bill; you declare that the Declaration of Right should have been brought forward; and observing, with regard to both prince and people, the most impartial treachery and desertion, you justify the suspicion of your sovereign by betraying the government, as you had told the people, until, at last, by this hollow conduct, and for some other steps, the result of mortified ambition, being dismissed, and another person put in your place, you fly to the ranks of the volunteers and canvass for mutiny; you announce that the country was ruined by other men during that period in which she had been sold by you. Your logic is that the repeal of a declaratory law is not the repeal of a law at all, and the effect of that logic is an English act affecting to emancipate Ireland by exercising over her the legislative authority of the British Parliament. Such has been your conduct; and at such conduct every order of your fellow-subjects have a right to exclaim. The merchant may say to you—the constitutionalist may say to you—the American may say to you—and I, *I* now say, and say to your beard, sir,—*You are not an honest man.*”

The qualities of wit, humor, ridicule, sarcasm, irony, and invective which we have just been con-

sidering, though of great efficacy in moving the minds of an audience toward the line of thought of the speaker, nevertheless demand great care, judgment, and discretion in their use. Wit should not be too pointed; it should not leave too deep a wound to rankle in your opponent's breast; ridicule should never descend to burlesque nor be allowed to play too freely on the infirmities of nature; sarcasm should not be too severe, irony too bitter, nor invective too strong unless the object be thoroughly disgusting. Good taste and kindly feeling should pervade all these qualities so as not to arouse a feeling of antagonism in either your opponent or your audience.

In the vortex of political agitation there is no telling where the strong denunciation will return to confront the orator and make him feel that a milder and sweeter phrase could have answered his purpose as well as the stinging rebuke or unmeasured declamation. He will not infrequently experience the truth of the lines:—

“Full many a shaft at random sent  
Finds mark the archer little meant,  
And many a word at random spoken  
May soothe or wound a heart that's broken.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE PERORATION.

AT the close of a speech, it is customary for an orator to give expression to some choice sentiment which he clothes in a better dress and animates with a loftier feeling than that which pervades the main body of the effort. This closing passage is termed the peroration; it may be regarded as the climax of the speech itself. The evident object of the more thrilling and finished language at the end of the argument, is to leave the best possible impression on the minds of the audience. It may be likened to the final breeze that wafts the oratorical craft to a safe and secure haven when it has successfully withstood and battled with the rude waves and winds on the high seas of debate. It is alike pleasing to the ear, satisfying to the mind, and gratifying to the heart. While a faulty beginning may often be counterbalanced by the eloquence of the advocate after he has become warmed up to his subject, yet there are no cases where the bad effect of an abrupt, unfinished, and disconnected ending can be adequately offset.

The peroration may answer a variety of purposes. It may seem to emphasize the leading sentiment the

orator has endeavored to advance in the course of his argument, as when Daniel Webster, in the Hayne contest, spoke of his devotion to the Union and reflected upon its blessings and the dangers which threatened its existence; it may be utilized in reviewing the general nature and circumstances of the occasion; as when Edmund Burke closed his speech at the trial of Warren Hastings; it may be useful in extolling and applauding some abstract principle or idea on which the speaker has devoted much thought and study, as when Henry Grattan eulogized Liberty at the close of his speech in moving the Declaration of Right; or it may be employed in expressing faith and confidence in the body addressed so as to secure their good-will, as in most addresses to a jury.

We can best judge what a peroration should be from what it usually is. It is generally more ornate, condensed and inflammatory than the body of the argument. If the main work is well done, the finishing up will be proportionately easy, graceful, natural, appropriate and effective. If the principal treatment be irregular, wanting in power, method and earnestness, the end will be unnatural, flat and unsatisfactory. It is the golden spike that makes the successful completion of a work of labor and difficulty, but eventual triumph. Solid masonry, skillful engineering, cold steel and iron, hold the main structure together, but the crowning finish may well be of material that will suggest more of

show than of strength, that will resist decay but still glisten in the sun.

It should not, on the other hand, be imagined that finished and telling language and exalted sentiments should be kept till the close of the speech. These should be interwoven in and pervade the entire production, like blood in the system, extending to and nourishing the entire body. The eulogiums on South Carolina and Massachusetts appear in their appropriate places in the Hayne and Webster debate, and are as fine if not finer than the perorations of either disputant. The speaker should be on the lookout constantly for every opportunity to give vent to a choice and elevated thought. The best passages of Burke, Pitt, Erskine and other eminent orators are to be found scattered throughout the body of their best speeches.

The following is the well-known peroration of Daniel Webster, to his speech in reply to Robert Y. Hayne. It will be seen that its object is to concentrate the leading sentiment of the orator in his speech and in his political career. It is measured; lofty and intense in its scope and purpose, single in its aim and triumphant in its bearing.

"I profess, sir, in my career hitherto to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the presentation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the

severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce and ruined credit. Under its benign influences these great interests immediately awoke as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us a copious fountain of national, social, personal happiness. I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union to see what might be hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty, when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counselor in affairs of this government, where thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union should be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it shall be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant, that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise. God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind. When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on

a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, with fraternal blood. Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in its original luster, not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured—bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, *What is all this worth?* nor those other words of delusion and folly, *Liberty first and Union afterward*, but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!”

Here is the conclusion of the arraignment of Warren Hastings by Edmund Burke. It is broad, comprehensive and philosophical in its treatment. It summarizes, in an eloquent and impressive manner, all the charges made by the orator, and gives a clear idea of the object of the prosecution, which might seem obscure if not collected and condensed at the close of the speech.

“I therefore charge Mr. Hastings with having destroyed, for private purposes, the whole system of government by the six provincial councils, which he had no right to destroy. I charge him with having delegated to others that power which the act of Parliament had directed him to preserve unalienably in himself. I charge him with having formed a committee to be mere inducements and tools, at the enormous expense of sixty-two



thousand pounds per annum. I charge him with having appointed a person their dewan, to whom these Englishmen were to be subservient tools; whose name, to their own knowledge, was, by the general voice of India, by the general recorded voice of the company, by recorded official transactions, by everything that can make a man known, abhorred, and detested, stamped with infamy; and with giving him the whole power, which he had thus separated from the council-general, and from provincial councils. I charge him with taking bribes of Gunga Govin Sing. I charge him with having done that bribe service which fidelity even in iniquity requires at the hands of the worst of men. I charge him with having robbed these people of whom he took the bribes. I charge him with having fraudulently alienated the fortunes of widows. I charge him with having, without right, title or purchase, taken the lands of orphans, and giving them to wicked persons under him. I charge him with having removed the natural guardians of a minor rajah and with having given that trust to a stranger, Debi Sing, whose wickedness was known to himself and all the world, and by whom the rajah, his family and dependents, were cruelly oppressed. I charge him with having committed to the management of Debi Sing three great provinces; and thereby with having wasted the country, ruined the landed interest, cruelly harassed the peasants, burnt their houses, seized their crops, tortured and degraded their persons, and destroyed the honor of the whole female race of the country.

“In the name of the Commons of England, I charge all this villainy upon Warren Hastings, in this last moment of my application to you.

“My lords, what is it, that we want here to a great act of national justice? Do we want a cause, my lords? You have the cause of oppressed princes, of undone women of the first rank, of desolated provinces, and of wasted kingdoms. Do you want a criminal, my lords? When was there so much iniquity ever laid to the charge of any man? No, my lords, you must not look to punish any other such delinquent from India. Warren Hastings has not left substance enough in India to nourish such another delinquent.

“My lords, is it a prosecutor you want? You have before you the Commons of Great Britain as prosecutors, and I believe, my lords, that the sun in his beneficent progress round the world does not behold a more glorious sight than that of men, separated from a remote people by the material bonds and barriers of nature, united by the bond of a social and moral community, all the Commons of England resenting as their own the indignities and cruelties that are offered to all the people of India.

“Do we want a tribunal? My lords, no example of antiquity, nothing in the modern world, can supply us with a tribunal like this. My lords, here we see virtually, in the mind's eye, that sacred majesty of the crown, under whose authority you sit, and whose power you exercise. We see in that invisible authority, what we all feel in reality and life, the beneficent powers and protecting justice of his majesty. We have here the heir apparent to the crown, such as the fond wishes of the people of England wish an heir apparent to be. We have here all the branches of the royal family in a situation between majesty and subjection, between the

sovereign and the subject,—offering a pledge in that situation for the support of the rights of the crown, and the liberties of the people, both which extremes they touch. My lords, we have a great hereditary peerage here, those who have their own honor, the honor of their ancestors, and of their posterity to guard, and who will justify, as they always have justified, that provision in the Constitution by which justice is made an hereditary office. My lords, we have here a new nobility, who have risen and exalted themselves by various merits, by great military services, which have extended the fame of this country from the rising to the setting sun; we have those who, by various civil merits and various civil talents, have been exalted to a situation which they well deserve, and in which they will justify the favor of their sovereign, and the good opinion of their fellow-subjects, and make them rejoice to see those virtuous characters, that were the other day upon a level with them, now exalted above them in rank, but feeling with them in sympathy what they felt in common with them before. We have persons exalted from the practice of the law, from the place in which they administered high, though subordinate, justice, to a seat here, to enlighten with their knowledge, and to strengthen with their votes, those principles which have distinguished the courts in which they have presided.

“My lords, you have here also the lights of our religion; you have the bishops of England, my lords; you have that true image of the primitive church in its ancient form, in its ancient ordinances purified from the superstitions and the vices which a long succession of ages will bring upon the best institutions. You have the represent-

atives of that religion, which says that their God is love, that the very vital spirit of their institution is charity; a religion which so much hates suppression that when the God whom we adore appeared in human form, he did not appear in a form of greatness and majesty, but in sympathy with the lowest of the people, and thereby made it a firm and ruling principle that their welfare was the object of all government, since the Person who was the Master of nature chose to appear himself in a subordinate situation. These are the considerations which influence them, which animate them and will animate them against all oppression. He who is called first among them, and first among us all, both of the flock that is fed, and of those who feed it, made Himself 'the servant of all.'

"My lords, these are the securities which we have in all the constituent parts of the body of this house. We know them, we reckon, we rest upon them, and commit safely the interests of India and of humanity into your hands. Therefore, it is with confidence that, ordered by the Commons,

"I impeach Warren Hastings, Esquire, of high crimes and misdemeanors.

"I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, whose parliamentary trust he has betrayed.

"I impeach him in the name of the Commons of Great Britain, whose national character he has dishonored.

"I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose laws, rights, and liberties he has subverted, whose properties he has destroyed, whose countries he has laid waste and desolate.

“I impeach him in the name, and by virtue, of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

“I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.”

This is the peroration of the address of Henry Grattan in moving the Declaration of Right in the Irish House of Commons.

In sublimity and pathos it has no superior, and in intensity of thought and metaphorical description it will take rank with the finest passages in Milton or Shakespeare.

“Hereafter, when these things shall be history—your age of thralldom, your sudden resurrection, commercial redress and miraculous armament—shall the historian stop at *liberty* and observe that here the principal men among us were found wanting, were awed by a weak ministry, bribed by an empty treasury, and when liberty was within their grasp, and her temple opened its folding doors, fell down, and were prostrated at the threshold?

“I might as a constituent come to your bar and demand liberty. I do call upon you by the laws of the land, and their violation; by the instructions of eighteen centuries; by the arms, inspiration and providence of the present movement—tell us the rule by which we shall go; assert the law of Ireland; declaim the liberty of the land! I will not be answered by a public lie, in the shape of an amendment; nor, speaking for the subject’s freedom, am I to hear of faction. I wish for nothing but

to breathe in this, our island, in common with my fellow-subjects, the air of liberty. I have no ambition unless it be to break your chain and contemplate your glory. I never will be satisfied so long as the meanest cottager in Ireland has a link of the British chain clanking to his rags. He may be naked; he shall not be in irons. And I do see the time at hand; the spirit is gone forth; the declaration of right is planted; and though great men should fall off, yet the cause shall live; and though he who utters this should die, yet the immortal fire shall outlast the humble organ who conveys it, and the breath of liberty, like the word of the holy man, will not die with the prophet, but survive him."

The closing passage in the speech of General E. D. Baker, at a meeting in New York City, during the American Civil War, is very touching and beautiful. It is as follows:—

"And if, from the far Pacific, a voice feebler than the feeblest murmur upon its shore may be heard to give you courage and hope in the contest, that voice is yours to-day. And if a man whose hair is gray, who is well-nigh worn out in the battle and trial of life, may pledge himself on such an occasion, and in such an audience, let me say as my last word, that when, amid sheeted fire and flame, I saw and led the hosts of New York as they charged in contest upon a foreign soil for the honor of your flag; so again, if providence shall will it, this feeble hand shall draw a sword never yet dishonored—not to fight for distant honor, in a foreign land, but to fight for country, for home, for law, for government, for constitution, for right, for freedom, for humanity, and in the

hope that the honor of my country may advance, and wherever that banner waves, there glory may pursue and freedom be established."

These illustrations show considerable degree of elaboration and finish, and as such are entitled to just praise and admiration. Yet it not unfrequently happens that a simple, unaffected, yet forcible termination to a speech will be as effective and appropriate as one that is more diffuse and ornate.

If the matter of discussion has been kept well in hand and has not been spread over too broad a field, if the rein has been held tightly on the imagination, then a simple and graceful ending will be as serviceable as one that abounds in lofty sentiments and ornate and polished diction. This was the style of peroration adopted by Demosthenes in his reply to *Æschines*. He simply implored the gods to give his enemies a better spirit toward him or hurl them to speedy destruction on sea and land if they remained obdurate.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ACTION.—VOICE AND GESTURE.

AN orator may possess all the requirements mentioned in the preceding chapters in the highest perfection, but if he be deficient in proper action, in a flexible voice and appropriate gesture, his most elaborate efforts will fall lifeless and awaken no responsive thrill in the hearts of his hearers. While his knowledge, his preparation, his training, may be all and even more than we have indicated, he himself must be the conductor to transmit the combined result of all these to his audience. The remarks of Cicero ("De Oratore") on the question of suitable action are so forcible and eloquent that we cannot do better than give them verbatim:—

"But the effect of all these particulars depends upon the *action*. Action is the predominant power in eloquence. Without it the best speaker can have no name, and with it a middling one may obtain the highest. It is said that Demosthenes, when asked what was the first constituent in eloquence, answered, that action was the first, the second and the third. This makes the story told by Æschines much better; after he had lost a cause he retired in disgrace from Athens to Rhodes, where, at the request of the Rhodians, he read that fine oration



which he pronounced against Ctesiphon, who was defended by Demosthenes; after he had finished it, he was requested next day to read that which was pronounced by Demosthenes *for* Ctesiphon, which he 'did with a charming full voice. When everybody was expressing their applause, '*How would you have applauded,*' says he, '*if you had heard the author himself deliver it?*' By this he intimated what a vast influence action had, since the change of the *actor* could make the same speech appear in quite a different light. Yet, doubtless, in all cases truth has the advantage of imitation, but if in action nature were sufficient for our purpose, we should have no occasion for having recourse to the rules of art. But since the passions of the soul, which are to be chiefly expressed or represented by action, are often so confused as to be quite obscured and almost obliterated, the causes of this obscurity must be dispelled, and advantage must be taken of those that are most unclouded and accessible. For nature has given every passion its peculiar expression in the look, the voice and the gestures, and the whole frame, the look, and the voice of a man are responsive to the passions of the mind, as the strings of a musical instrument are to the fingers that touch them. For as a musical instrument has its different keys, so every voice is sharp, full, quick, slow, loud or low, and each of these keys have different degrees, which beget other strains, such as the smooth and the sharp, the contracted and lengthened, the continued and interrupted, the broken and divided, the tender, the shrill and the swelling; all these require to be managed with art and discretion, and the orator makes use of them as the painter does of his colors, to give variety to his piece.

. . . Anger has a peculiar pronunciation, which is quick, sharp and broken. The tone of pity and grief is different, it is full, moving, broken, and mournful. Fear is low, diffident, and humble. Vehemence demands a strain that is intense, strong and majestically threatening. Pleasure is diffusive, soft, tender, cheerful and gay. Uneasiness is of another sort, it is oppressive without commiseration, and its tone is grave and uniform.

“All these emotions should be accompanied with action, not *theatrical* action, limited to particular words, but extended to the whole discourse, aiding the sense, not by pointing, but by *emphasis*, a *strong, manly action, borrowed from the use of arms*, or the school of arts, and not from *stage performers*. The hand ought not to saw the air, and the fingers in moving should follow the words, and not precede, as it were, to point them out. The arm ought to be stretched forward, as if to brandish the bolts of eloquence; and the stamping the foot ought to take place either in the beginning or the end of a debate. But all depends upon the face, and all the power of the face is centered in the eyes. All action depends upon the passions, of which the face is the picture, and the eyes the interpreters, for this is the only part of the body that can express all the passions; nor can anyone who looks another way create the same emotions.

“A great deal consists in the right management of the eyes, for the features of the face ought not to be altered too much, lest we become ridiculous or disgustful. It is by the vividness or the languor of the eye, by a dejected or a cheerful look, that we express the emotions of the heart, and accommodate what we say to what we feel. Action is, as it were, the language of the body,

and therefore ought to correspond to the thought. For nature, as she has supplied the horse and the lion with a mane, a tail and ears, to express their feelings, has endowed the eyes of mankind with the same properties. Therefore, in the action of an orator, the look takes place next to the voice, for the eyes direct the features. But nature has given a particular force to all the modifications of action; therefore we see it has great effect upon the ignorant, the vulgar, and the greatest upon foreigners, who are unacquainted with our tongue. Words affect none but him who understands the language, and sentiments that are pointed often escape the undiscerning. But an action expressive of the passions of the mind is a language universally understood, for the same expressions have the same effects in all circumstances, and all men know them in others by the same characters which express them in themselves." (Guthrie's Translation.)

Closely allied to the appropriate action of the body is the conduct and management of the voice. We cannot do better than give the observations of the same eminent author on this subject:—

"The chief excellence," says Cicero, "to be admired in a good delivery is a fine voice. If an orator possess not a good voice, it ought, such as it is, to be improved. I shall not here point out in what manner the voice becomes susceptible of improvement; but I think it of great importance that the means of improving it should be cultivated. But the train of my discourse leads me to repeat the observation I made a little while ago, that what is most useful is most becoming. I know not how this happens, but it is certain that in speaking nothing

tends more to acquire an agreeable voice than frequently to relax it by passing from one strain to another, and nothing tends more to injure it than violent exertion unrelieved by modulation. What gives greater pleasure to our ears and more charms to delivery than judicious transitions, variety and change? I have heard it told of Gracchus that he used an ivory flute which a man who stood privately behind him while he was speaking, touched so skillfully that he immediately struck the proper note, when he wanted either to quicken or to soften the vehemence of his voice. . . . In every modulation of the voice there is a mean peculiar to itself. The gradual rising of the notes from this base is both proper and pleasing, but to set out with bawling has something in it very clownish, and is as hurtful to the voice as the other method is salutary. In short, there is a certain straining to which the flute will not suffer you to rise, but bring you down to the proper note, and there is somewhat in the lowering the voice, which, on the other hand, is very grave, but must sink through all the several degrees of the scale. This variety and this progression through all the tones will both preserve the voice and give a sweetness to the action. As to the flute, you may leave that at home, but the spirit of such a practice you ought to carry to the bar."

To these eloquent and at the same time practical suggestions and observations of one of the world's greatest masters of oratory and all its allied and kindred subjects, nothing can be said to add force or beauty. Were we simply seeking *general* directions we might stop right here. But the student

requires something of the *details* of his art in order to be more fully equipped for actual warfare in the former. It is well to know the broad highway of success, but in all roads to great excellence there are numerous and dangerous pitfalls into which he will tumble if he be not forewarned.

Let us consider the matter of gesture first. We have endeavored so far to impress upon the reader's mind the necessity of a good education, a clear and accurate knowledge of language, beginning with words, the simplest form of speech, and ending in figure, the boldest and best means of illustrating truth, a proper understanding of the subject of discussion and its distribution under proper heads, topics and arguments, together with the appropriate office of wit, humor and other forms of unargumentative discourse, and above all the importance of a firm, sincere, manly, earnest and consistent personal character. Every successful orator should possess all these requirements and pretty much in the same degree. All those we have had occasion to name were so possessed. The matter of delivery takes a peculiar turn, however. We can prescribe studies with a fair degree of certainty, but can we prescribe rules of action with any degree of precision? Can we say when the right or the left arm should be raised or lowered, the eyebrows elevated or contracted, or when to stamp or move the feet? There are not wanting those who maintain that we can. On the other hand, is there not weight in the sug-

gestion that when the speaker is equipped in the manner just pointed out the movements of the body will readily and naturally conform to those of the mind? In other words, is the action of the orator natural or artificial and theatrical? Stated in this way there ought not to be any difficulty in giving the proper answer, and that is that the motions of the orator will consist of those natural and manly gestures which flow from a person earnest and sincere in his cause, with which he has made himself familiar by previous patient study.

The theatrical, or artificial, method, on the other hand, studies postures, curves, strides and an almost infinite variety of bodily motions. These, to the eyes of the audience, are agreeable and adapted to the expression of the many feelings assumed by the actor. His object is to portray jealousy, revenge, remorse, anger, love, frenzy, ambition,—passions directly opposite to those ordinarily evinced by the public speaker. His aim should be to show calmness, courage, consistency, knowledge, and goodwill. These do not require eccentric bodily motions. Yet the orator must pay good attention to those movements which tend to show his interest in his subject. An erect and manly carriage, a natural posture, easy and unaffected movements on the platform, are among the essential requisites. The judicious pointing of the hand and finger in certain trains of argument and thought, carries force and strength. That mere gesture which partakes of

the studied and artificial kind holds but a small place in the orator's make-up as compared with the skill and ability with which he marshals his thoughts and formulates his language, is seen from the meager accounts we have of the gestures of great orators.

Their epigrams, metaphors, trenchant truths, staggering blows, and elegant declamation, are all treasured in literature and handed down from one generation to another. Not so of their gestures. Who has ever heard whether Cicero raised his arm, stamped his foot, or rolled his eye? Where can we find the movements of Pitt, of Fox, of Grattan, of Burke, of Webster, of Prentiss? No chronicler has deigned to hand them down. We simply know that they were earnest, and their language we have. Cicero, in his beautiful treatises, considers action only in the most general aspect, and although his observations are full of truths and the result of the experience of a master mind, yet they are still broad generalizations and show little of the minute treatment that characterizes the great author when treating of the beauties of speech, and the forms and manner of expressing noble sentiments. Probably we can make greater headway by considering what the speaker should avoid rather than what he should attempt. He should, then, avoid stiff and stilted postures and gestures. He should shun boyish poses and everything like timidity or lack of self-possession. The term "nat-

uralness" embraces most of what can be said in regard to gesture. The feelings and sentiments which the speaker wishes to awaken in others he must first feel himself, and if he be so filled with the paramount importance of the subject and the occasion, it should not be difficult to conform the body, which is the mere tenement of the spirit within, to the appropriate expression of his theme.

The great Roman in his observations about voice and delivery has beautifully expressed about all that can be said upon the subject. There are not wanting those who lay considerable claim to teaching special oratorical delivery, who seem to encourage the idea that there is something in the voice and expression of the orator which calls for peculiar developmental training. We cannot quite subscribe to this view. The chief aim of the speaker should be to deliver his thoughts in a natural way, raise his voice not to make a loud noise, but for the purpose of being heard, be rapid in his utterances, when excited by his subject, slow when discussing sober propositions which appeal to the understanding only, emphatic on those points which require emphasis. As observed by Cicero, he should avoid bawling, and not "o'erstep the modesty of nature."

One of the most imperative mandates of good speaking is to preserve perfect control of the manner as well as of the matter of delivery. The latter can be accomplished in the closet, in the study, and the former must be acquired by appropriate practice in



private as well as in public. The exercise of obtaining the proper pitch from the tone of the flute is not as chimerical as it may appear to some. A lengthy discussion creates great demands on the voice. Should a speaker begin on a high key, it would not be long before his vocal organs would give out. An easy, low-toned beginning must therefore be commended. This was the character of the commencement of Daniel Webster's reply to Mr. Hayne.

The scene where Mr. Webster began his celebrated reply to Robert Y. Hayne is thus graphically described by one of his biographers, H. C. Lodge:—

“In the midst of the hush of expectation, in that dead silence which is so peculiarly oppressive because it is possible only when many human beings are gathered together, Mr. Webster rose. He had sat impassive and immovable during all the preceding days, while the storm of argument and invective had beaten about his head. At last his time had come, and as he rose and stood forth, drawing himself up to his full height, his personal grandeur and his majestic calm thrilled all who looked upon him. With perfect quietness, unaffected apparently by the atmosphere of intense feeling about him, he said, in a low, even tone [see page 138]. This opening sentence was a piece of consummate art. The simple and appropriate image, the low voice, the calm manner, relieved the strained excitement of the audience, which might have ended by disconcerting the speaker if it had been maintained. Every one was now at his ease; and when the monotonous reading of the resolu-

tion ceased, Mr. Webster was master of the situation, and had his listeners in complete control. With breathless attention they followed him as he proceeded. The strong, masculine sentences, the sarcasm, the pathos, the reasoning, the burning appeals to love of state and country, flowed on unbroken. As his feeling warmed, the fire came into his eyes; there was a glow on his swarthy cheek; his strong right arm seemed to sweep away resistlessly the whole phalanx of his opponents, and the deep and melodious cadences of his voice sounded like harmonious organ tones, as they filled the chamber with their music."

From this description we do not think the student can perceive any inclination to the artificial effects in voice or gesture. The easy, self-possessed manner, gradually warming with the subject, is all that is here indicated. Lest, however, the reader should infer, from this graphic portrait of Mr. Webster, that great natural graces of person, which that orator undoubtedly possessed, are indispensable to a high name for eloquence, we give a picture of one who won the sobriquet of "the old man eloquent" in the House of Representatives, where a reputation for that talent is secured with the greatest difficulty; this was John Quincy Adams. He is thus described by his biographer, John T. Morse, Jr.:—

"Living in the age of oratory, he earned the name of 'the old man eloquent.' Yet he was not an orator in the sense in which Webster, Clay, and Calhoun were orators. He was not a rhetorician; he had neither grace of manner nor a fine presence, neither an imposing

delivery, nor even pleasing tones. On the contrary, he was exceptionally lacking in all these qualities. He was short, rotund and bald; about the time when he entered Congress, complaints became frequent, in his diary, of weak and inflamed eyes, and soon these organs became so rheumy that the water would trickle down his cheeks; a shaking of the hand grew upon him to such an extent that in time he had to use artificial assistance to steady it for writing; his voice was high, shrill, liable to break, piercing enough to make itself heard but not agreeable. This hardly seems the picture of an orator, nor was it to any charm of elocution that he owed his influence, but rather to the fact that what he said was well worth the hearing. . . . Listeners were always sure to get a bold and an honest utterance, and often pretty keen words, from him, and he never spoke to an inattentive or to a thin house. . . . His power of invective was extraordinary, and he was untiring and merciless in the use of it. . . . Men winced and cowered before his milder attacks, became sometimes dumb, sometimes furious with mad rage, before his fiercer assaults."

May it not safely be concluded, therefore, that it is the consciousness of the orator that he has mastered his subject in all its details, that he knows precisely where to lay his hand on a vigorous expression, a bold metaphor, a trenchant fact, that prompts and sustains him in his eloquence? Without this power, studied graces, labored elocution and artificial gestures are vain and impotent, but with it appropriate bodily movements will follow of their own free will.

## CHAPTER X.

THE DEBATE ON THE TARIFF.—RANDOLPH, HAYNE, CLAY.  
—ON THE LAND QUESTION.—CLAY, CALHOUN.

To further explain and exemplify the rules and principles herein laid down, we append hereto portions of public debates between orators of wide reputation. Some of the subjects discussed were at one time of a very exciting nature, but we trust the selections can be read with interest and profit; especially as the disputants have long been removed from the scenes of the contests.

One of the best subjects for debate in former times, as well as in our own, was that of the tariff—the principle or power claimed by nations of levying a tax or duty upon goods and materials manufactured or produced in one country and brought for sale to another.

The discussion of this doctrine gave rise in former times, and gives rise to-day, to an almost infinite variety of perplexing and aggravating questions and opposing theories. It affects all classes of citizens, and that is sufficient to make it a subject of universal contention and discussion. It affects the wages of the poor and the profits of the rich, and both parties claim that their doctrine, if tried and

adhered to, will bring prosperity, and the adoption of the other view will cause irretrievable ruin and disaster. It has made and unmade cabinets and administrations, and been the battle-cry of contending parties for many years. At one time it threatened very seriously the existence of the American Union itself. We need give no apology for its introduction, as it not only is a subject upon which every intelligent person should be informed, but exhibits in our country some excellent specimens of argumentative reasoning. It is a subject, too, that is quite different from those heretofore presented, in that there is little scope for the elegant, metaphorical language, specimens of which we have so freely given. Its discussion deals with cold facts and figures; the imagination is kept in the background. •

Mr. Randolph, in his speech delivered in 1824, said:—

“Sir, when are we to have enough of this tariff question? In 1816 it was supposed to be settled. Only three years thereafter another proposition for increasing it was sent from this house to the Senate, *baited* with a tax of four cents per pound on brown sugar. It was, fortunately, rejected in that body. In what manner *this bill* is baited it does not become me to say; but I have too distinct a recollection of the vote in committee of the whole, on the duty upon molasses, and afterwards of the vote in the House on the same question; of the votes of more than one of the States on that question, not to mark it well. I do not say that the change of the vote

on that question was affected by any man's *voting* against his own motion; but I do not hesitate to say that it was effected by one man's *electioneering* against his own motion. I am very glad, Mr. Speaker, that old Massachusetts Bay, and the Province of Maine and Sadagahock, by whom we stood in the days of the Revolution, now stand by the South, and will not aid in fixing on us this system of taxation, compared with which the taxation of Mr. Grenville and Lord North was as nothing. I speak with knowledge of what I say when I declare that this bill is an attempt to reduce the country south of Mason and Dixon's line, and cast off the Alleghany Mountains, to a state of worse than colonial bondage; a state to which the 'domination of Great Britain was, in my judgment, far preferable; and I trust I shall always have the fearless integrity to utter any political sentiment which the head sanctions and the heart ratifies; for the British Parliament never would have dared to lay such duties on our imports or their exports to us, either '*at home*' or here, as is now proposed to be laid upon the imports from abroad. At that time we had the command of the market of the vast dominions then subject, and we should have had those which have since been subjected to the British Empire; we enjoyed a free trade eminently superior to anything that we can enjoy, if this bill shall go into operation. It is a sacrifice of the interests of a part of this nation to the ideal benefit of the rest. It marks us out as the victims of a worse than Egyptian bondage. It is a barter of so much of our rights, of so much of the fruits of our labor, for political power to be transferred to other hands. It ought to be met, and I trust it will be met,

in the Southern country as was the stamp act, and by all those measures, which I will not detain the house by recapitulating, which succeeded the stamp act, and produced the final breach with the mother country, which it took about ten years to bring about, as I trust in my conscience it will not take as long a time to bring about similar results from this measure, should it become a law.

“Sir, events now passing everywhere, which plant a thorn in my pillow and a dagger in my heart, admonish me of the difficulty of governing with sobriety any people who are over head and ears in debt. That state of things begets a temper which sets at naught everything like reason and common sense. This country is, unquestionably, laboring under great distress; but we cannot legislate it out of that distress. We may by your legislation, reduce all the country south of Mason and Dixon’s line, the whites as well as the blacks, to the condition of Helots; you can do no more. We have had placed before us, in the course of this discussion, foreign examples and authorities; and among other things we have been told, as an argument in favor of this measure, of the prosperity of Great Britain. Have gentlemen taken into consideration that, not excepting Mexico and that fine country which lie between the Orinoco and the Caribbean Sea, England is decidedly superior, in point of physical advantages, to every country under the sun? This is unquestionably true. I will enumerate some of these advantages: First, there is her climate. In England, such is the temperature of the air that a man can there do more days’ work in the year, and more hours’ work in the day, than in any other cli-

mate in the world; of course I include Scotland and Ireland in the description. It is in such a climate only that the human animal can bear, without extirpation, the corrupted air, the noisome exhalations, the incessant labor, of those accursed manufactories. Yes, sir, accursed; for I say it is an accursed thing, which I will neither taste nor touch nor handle. If we were to act here on the English system, we should have yellow fever at Philadelphia and New York, not in August merely, but from June to January, and from January to June. The climate of this country alone, were there no other natural obstacle to it, says aloud, You shall not manufacture! Even our tobacco factories, admitted to be the most wholesome of any sort of factories, are known to be, where extensive, the very nidus (if I may use the expression) of yellow fever and other fevers of similar type. In another of the advantages of Great Britain, so important to her prosperity, we are almost on a par with her, if we know how properly to use it. *Fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint*—for as regards defense, we are, to all intents and purposes, almost as much an island as England herself. But one of her insular advantages we can never acquire. Every part of that country is accessible from the sea. There, as you recede from the sea, you do not get further from the sea. I know that a good deal will be said of our majestic rivers, about the father of floods, and his tributary streams; but with the Ohio, frozen up all the winter, and dry all the summer, with a long, tortuous, difficult, and dangerous navigation thence to the ocean, the gentlemen of the West may rest assured that they will never derive one particle of advantage from even a total prohibition



of foreign manufactures. You may succeed in reducing us to your level of misery, but if we were to agree to become your slaves, you never can derive one farthing of advantage from this bill. What parts of this country can derive any advantage from it? Those parts only where there is a water power in immediate contact with navigation, such as the vicinities of Boston, Providence, Baltimore, and Richmond. Petersburg is the last of these as you travel south. You take a bag of cotton up the river to Pittsburg, or to Zanesville, to have it manufactured and sent down to New Orleans for a market, and before your bag of cotton has got to the place of manufacture, the manufacturer of Providence has received his returns for the goods made from his bag of cotton purchased at the same time that you purchased yours. No, sir, gentlemen may as well insist that because the Chesapeake Bay, *mare nostrum*, our Mediterrean Sea, gives us every advantage of navigation, we shall exclude from it everything but steamboats and those boats called *κατ' ἐξουσίαν*, *per emphasin, par excellence*, Kentucky boats—a sort of huge, square, clumsy, wooden box. And why not insist upon it? Haven't you the 'power to regulate commerce'? Would not that too be a 'regulation of commerce'? It would, indeed, and a pretty regulation it is, and so is this bill. And, sir, I marvel that the representation from the great commercial state of New York should be in favor of this bill. If operative, and if inoperative why talk of it?—if operative, it must, like the embargo of 1807–1809, transfer no small portion of the wealth of the London of America, as New York has been called, to Quebec and Montreal. She will receive the most of her imports

from abroad, down the river. I do not know any bill that could be better calculated for Vermont than this bill, because through Vermont, from Quebec, Montreal, and other positions on the St. Lawrence, we are, if it passes, unquestionably to receive our supplies of foreign goods. It will, no doubt, suit the Niagara frontier.

“But, sir, I must not let myself be led too far astray from the topic of the peculiar advantages of England as a manufacturing country. Her vast beds of coal are inexhaustible; there are daily discoveries of it, greater than ages past have consumed, to which beds of coal her manufacturing establishments have been transferred, as any man may see who will compare the present population of her towns with what it was formerly. It is to these beds of coal that Birmingham, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Leeds and other manufacturing towns owe their growth. If you could destroy her coal in one day, you would cut at once the sinews of her power. Then there are her metals, and particularly tin, of which she has the exclusive monopoly. Tin, I know, is to be found in Japan, and perhaps elsewhere, but in practice England has now the monopoly of that article. I might go further and I might say that England possesses an advantage, *quoad hoc*, in her institutions; for *there* men are compelled to pay their debts; but *here* men are not only not compelled to pay their debts, but they are protected in their refusal to pay them in the scandalous evasion of their legal obligations; and after being convicted of embezzling the public money and the money of others, of which they were appointed guardians and trustees, they have the impudence to obtrude their unblushing fronts into society

and elbow honest men out of their way. There, though all men are on a footing of equality on the highway, and in the courts of law, at will and at market, yet the castes in Hindoostan are not more distinctly separated one from the other than the different classes of society are in England. It is true it is practicable for a wealthy merchant or manufacturer, or his descendants, after having, through two or three generations, washed out what is considered the stain of their original occupation, to emerge, by slow degrees, into the higher ranks of society; but this rarely happens. Can you find men of vast fortune in this country content to move in the lower circles—content as the ox under the daily drudgery of the yoke? It is true that in England some of these wealthy people take it into their heads to buy seats in Parliament. But when they get there, unless they possess great talents, they are mere nonentities, their existence is only to be found in the red book which contains a list of the members of Parliament. Now, sir, I wish to know if, in the Western country, where any man may get beastly drunk for three pence sterling—in England you cannot get a small wineglass of spirits under twenty-five cents; one such drink of grog as I have seen swallowed in this country would there cost a dollar—in the Western country, where every man can get as much meat and bread as he can consume, and yet spend the best part of his days, and nights too, perhaps, on the tavern benches, or loitering at the cross-roads asking the news, can you expect the people of such a country, with countless millions of wild lands and wild animals besides, can be cooped up in manufacturing establishments, and made to work sixteen hours a day, under the

superintendence of a driver, yes, a driver, compared with whom a Southern overseer is a gentleman and a man of refinement; for, if they do not work, these work people in the manufactories, they cannot eat; and among all the punishments that can be devised (put death even among the number), I defy you to get as much work out of a man by any of them as when he knows that he must work before he can eat." (Here follows what we quoted on page 124.)

He then continues:—

"But, it is said, a measure of this sort is necessary to create employment for the people. Why, sir, where are the handles of the plow? Are they unfit for young gentlemen to touch? or will they choose to enter your military academies, where the sons of the rich are educated at the expense of the poor, and where so many political janissaries are every year turned out, always ready for war, and to support the powers that be—equal to the Stelitzes of Moscow or St. Petersburg. I do not speak now of individuals, of course, but of the tendency of the system. The hounds follow the huntsman because he feeds them, and bears the whip. I speak of the system. I concur most heartily, sir, in the censure which has been passed upon the greediness of office, which stands, a stigma on the present generation. Men from whom we might expect, and from whom I did expect, better things crowd the antechamber of the palace for every vacant office; nay, even before men are dead their shoes are wanted for some barefooted office seeker. How mistaken was the old Roman, the old Consul, who, whilst he held the plow by one hand,

and death held the other, exclaimed, '*Diis immortalibus sero.*'

"Our fathers, how did they acquire their property?—By straightforward industry, rectitude and frugality. How did they become dispossessed of their property?—By indulging in speculative hopes and designs, seeking the shadow whilst they lost the substance; and now, instead of being, as they were, men of respectability, men of substance, men capable and willing to live independently and honestly and hospitably, too—for who so parsimonious as the prodigal who has nothing to give? what have we become?—A nation of sharks, preying on one another through the instrumentality of this paper system, which, if Lycurgus had known of it, he would unquestionably have adopted, in preference to his iron money, if his object had been to make the Spartans the most accomplished knaves, as well as to keep them poor.

"The manufacturer of the East may carry his woollens, or his cottons, or his coffins to what market he pleases—I do not buy of him; self-defense is the first law of nature. You drive us into it. You create heats and animosities among this great family who ought to live like brothers; and, after you have got this temper of mind roused among the Southern people, do you expect to come among us to trade, and expect us to buy your wares? Sir, not only shall we not buy them, but we shall take such measures (I will not enter into the detail of them now) as shall render it impossible for you to sell them. Whatever may be said here of the misguided counsels, as they have been termed, of the theorists of Virginia, they have, so far as regards this question, the confidence of United Virginia. We are asked, Does

the South lose anything by this bill?—why do you cry out? I put it, sir, to any man from any part of the country, from the Gulf of Mexico, from the Balize to the eastern shore of Maryland—which, I thank Heaven, is not yet under the government of Baltimore, and will not be, unless certain theories should come into play in that state, which we have lately heard of, and a majority of men, told by the head, should govern—whether the whole country between the points I have named, is not unanimous in opposition to this bill? Would it not be unexampled that we should thus complain, protest, resist, and that all the while nothing should be the matter? Are our understandings (however low mine may be rated, much sounder than mine are engaged in this resistance) to be rated so low as that we are to be made to believe that we are children affrighted by a bugbear? We are asked, however, Why do you cry out? It is all for your good, sir. This reminds me of the mistresses of George the Second, who, when they were insulted by the populace, on arriving in London (as all such creatures deserve to be by every mob), put their heads out of the window and said to them in their broken English, ‘Goot people, we be come for your goots;’ to which one of the mob rejoined, ‘Yes, and for our chattels too, I fancy.’ Just so it is with the oppressive exactions proposed and advocated by the supporters of this bill, on the plea of the good of those who are its victims.

“Suppose this measure is not what it is represented to be; that the fears of the South are altogether illusory and visionary; that it will produce all the good predicted of it—an honorable gentleman from Kentucky said

yesterday, and I was sorry to hear it, for I have great respect for that gentleman and for other gentlemen from that state, that the question was not whether a bare majority should pass the bill, but whether the majority or the minority should rule. The gentleman is wrong, and if he will consider the matter rightly, he will see it. Is there no difference between the patient and the actor? We are passive, we do not call them to act or to suffer; but we call upon them not so to act as that we must necessarily suffer; and I venture to say that, in any government, properly constituted, this very consideration would operate conclusively, that if the burden is to be laid on one hundred and two it ought not to be laid by one hundred and five. We are the eel that is being flayed, while the cook maid pats us on the head and cries with the clown in King Lear, 'Down, wantons, down.' There is but one portion of the country which can profit by this bill, and from that portion of the country comes this bare majority in favor of it. I bless God that Massachusetts and old Virginia are once again rallying under the same banner against oppressive and unconstitutional taxation; for, if all the blood be drawn from out the body, I care not whether it be by the British Parliament or the American Congress, by an emperor or a king abroad or by a president at home."

From this and other extracts that have been given we can form some idea of the style of Mr. Randolph, one of the truly great names of America. There is abundance of pith and point in all that he says; he shows a great familiarity with the great men of that day, and an intimate knowledge of the classics

and English literature—all of which qualities we have endeavored to impress upon the reader to cultivate with zeal and avidity.

The tariff was the great bugbear of the South and slavery that of the North, and it is certainly unfortunate that we cannot select examples of the best style of American oratory which do not deal with these harrowing subjects. But it is only questions like these that call forth great efforts, and if we allude to American oratory at all, we must present these speeches as we find them—nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice—and if they are read in the proper spirit they will be found to compare very favorably with the noblest efforts of antiquity.

Before giving the speech of Mr. Clay, the father of the American or tariff system, we will present a specimen of the free-trade views of Mr. Hayne, delivered in 1832; he said:—

“Mr. President, the plain and seemingly obvious truth, that in a fair and equal exchange of commodities all parties gained, is a noble discovery of modern times. The contrary principle naturally led to commercial rivalries, and abuses of all sorts. The benefits of commerce being regarded as a stake to be won, or an advantage to be wrested from others by fraud or by force, governments naturally strove to secure them to their own subjects; and when they once set out in this wrong direction, it was quite natural that they should not stop short till they ended in binding in the bonds of restric-



tion not only the whole country but all of its parts. Thus we are told that England first protected, by her restrictive policy, her whole empire against all the world, then Great Britain against the colonies, then the British islands against each other, and ended by vainly attempting to protect all the great interests and employments of the state by balancing them against each other. Sir, such a system, carried fully out, is not confined to rival nations, but protects one town against another, considers villages and even families as rivals, and cannot stop short of 'Robinson Crusoe in his goat skins.' It takes but one step further to make every man his own lawyer, doctor, farmer and shoemaker—and, if I may be allowed an Irishism, his own seamstress and washerwoman. The doctrine of free trade, on the contrary, is founded on the true social system.

"It looks on all mankind as children of a common parent—and the great family of nations as linked together by mutual interests. Sir, as there is a religion, so I believe there is a *politics of nature*. Cast your eyes over this various earth. See its surface diversified by hills and valleys, rocks and fertile fields. Notice its different productions—its infinite varieties of soil and climate. See the mighty rivers winding their way to the very mountain's base, and thence guiding man to the vast ocean, dividing, yet connecting nations. Can any man who considers these things with the eye of a philosopher, not read the design of the great Creator (written legibly in his works) that his children should be drawn together in a free commercial intercourse, and mutual exchanges of the various gifts with which a bountiful Providence has blessed them? Commerce, sir, restricted even as she

has been, has been the great source of civilization and refinement all over the world. Next to the Christian religion, I consider free trade in its largest sense as the greatest blessing that can be conferred upon any people. Hear, sir, what Patrick Henry, the great orator of Virginia, whose soul was the very temple of freedom, says on this subject:—

“ ‘Why should we fetter commerce? If a man is in chains, he droops and bows to the earth, because his spirit is broken; but let him *twist the fetters from his legs* and he will stand erect. Fetter not commerce! Let her be as free as the air. She will range the whole creation and return on the four winds of heaven to bless the land with plenty.’

“ ‘But it has been said that free trade would do very well if all nations would adopt it; but as it is, every nation must protect itself from the effect of restrictions by countervailing measures. I am persuaded, sir, that this is a great, a most fatal error. If retaliation is resorted to for the honest purpose of producing a redress of grievance, and while adhered to no longer than there is a hope of success, it may, like war itself, be sometimes just and necessary. But if it have no such object, ‘it is the unprofitable combat of seeing which can do the other the most harm.’ The case can hardly be conceived in which permanent restrictions as a measure of retaliation could be profitable. In every possible situation a trade, whether more or less restricted, is profitable or it is not. This can only be decided by experience, and if the trade be left to regulate itself, water would not more naturally seek its level than the intercourse adjust itself to the true interest of the parties. Sir, as to this idea

of the regulation by government of the pursuits of men, I consider it as a remnant of barbarism disgraceful to an enlightened age and inconsistent with the first principles of rational liberty. I hold government to be entirely incapable, from its position, of exercising such a power wisely, prudently or justly. Are the rulers of the world the depositaries of its collected wisdom? So can we forget the advice of a great statesman to his son—‘Go see the world, my son, that you may learn with how little wisdom the world is governed.’ And is our own government an exception to this rule, or do we not find here, as everywhere else, that

‘ Man, proud man,  
Robed in a little brief authority,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
As make the angels weep.’

The gentleman has appealed to the example of other nations. Sir, they are all against him. They have had restrictions enough, to be sure, but they are getting heartily sick of them, and in England, particularly, would readily get rid of them if they could. We have been assured by the declaration of a Minister from his place in Parliament that there is a growing conviction, among all men of sense and reflection in that country, that the true policy of all nations is to be found in unrestricted industry. Sir, in England they are now retracing their steps, and endeavoring to relieve themselves of the system as fast as they can. Within a few years past upwards of three hundred statutes imposing restrictions in that country have been repealed, and a case has recently occurred there which seems to leave no doubt that, if Great Britain has grown great, it is, as

Mr. Huskinson has declared, 'not in consequence of, but in spite of, their restrictions.' The silk manufacture, protected by enormous bounties, was found to be in such a declining condition that the government was obliged to do something to save it from total ruin. And what did they do? They considerably reduced the duty on foreign silks, both on the raw material and manufactured article. The consequence was the immediate revival of the silk manufacture, which has since been nearly doubled.

"Sir, the experience of France is equally decisive. Bonaparte's effort in introducing cotton and sugar has cost that country millions; and but the other day a foolish attempt to protect the iron mines spread devastation through France, and nearly ruined the wine trade, on which one-fifth of her citizens depend for subsistence. As to Spain, unhappy Spain, 'fenced round with restrictions,' her experience, one would suppose, would convince us, if anything could, that the protecting system in politics, like bigotry in religion, was utterly at war with sound principles and a liberal and enlightened policy. Sir, I may say, in the words of the philosophical statesman of England, 'Leave a generous people free to seek their own road to perfection.' Thank God, the night is passing away, and we have lived to see the dawn of a glorious day. The cause of free trade must and will prosper and finally triumph. The political economist is abroad; light has come into the world; and in this instance, at least, men will not 'prefer darkness rather than light.' Sir, let it not be said, in after times, that the statesmen of America were behind the age in which they lived—that they initiated the young and vig-

orous country into the enervating and corrupting practices of European nations—and that at the moment when the whole world were looking to us for an example, we arrayed ourselves in the cast-off follies and exploded errors of the Old World, and, by the introduction of a vile system of artificial stimulants and political gambling, impaired the healthful vigor of the body politic, and brought on a decrepitude and premature dissolution.”

In this extremely lucid exposition of the free-trade doctrine we see several of the features we have been considering; it displays a rare knowledge of the subject under discussion, derived, undoubtedly, from careful study, and shows a thorough acquaintance with Shakespeare, that great fountain of human thought and feeling. We will give Mr. Clay's method of dealing with the same subject, from an entirely opposite point of view.

Mr. Clay, not long after this speech by Mr. Hayne, spoke as follows:—

“In one sentiment, Mr. President, expressed by the honorable gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Hayne), though perhaps not in the sense intended by him, I entirely concur. I agree with him that the decision on the system of policy embraced in this debate involves the future destiny of this growing country. One way, I verily believe, it would lead to deep and general distress, general bankruptcy and national ruin, without benefit to any part of the Union; the other, the existing prosperity will be preserved and augmented, and the nation will continue rapidly to advance in wealth, power and

greatness, without prejudice to any section of the confederacy.

"Thus viewing the question, I stand here as the humble but zealous advocate, not of the interests of one state or seven states only, but of the whole Union. And never before have I felt more intensely the overpowering weight of that share of responsibility which belongs to me in these deliberations. Never before have I had more occasion than I now have to lament my want of those intellectual powers the possession of which might enable me to unfold to this Senate and to illustrate to this people great truths, intimately connected with the lasting welfare of my country. I should indeed sink overwhelmed and subdued beneath the appalling magnitude of the task which lies before me if I did not feel myself sustained and fortified by a thorough consciousness of the justness of the cause which I have espoused, and by a persuasion, I hope not presumptuous, that it has the approbation of that Providence who has so often smiled upon these United States.

"Eight years ago it was my painful duty to present to the other House of Congress an unexaggerated picture of the general distress pervading the whole land. We must all yet remember some of its frightful features. We all know that the people were oppressed and borne down by an enormous load of debt; that the value of property was at the lowest point of depression; that ruinous sales and sacrifices were everywhere made of real estate; that stop laws and relief laws and paper money were adopted to save the people from impending destruction; that a deficit in the public revenue existed, which compelled government to seize upon and divert from its

legitimate object the appropriations from the sinking fund, to redeem the national debt; and that our commerce and navigation were threatened with a complete paralysis. In short, sir, if I were to select any term of seven years since the adoption of the present constitution, which exhibited a scene of the most widespread dismay and desolation, it would be exactly that term of seven years which immediately preceded the establishment of the tariff of 1824.

“I have now to perform the more pleasing task of exhibiting an imperfect sketch of the existing state of the unparalleled prosperity of the country. On a general survey we behold cultivation extended, the arts flourishing, the face of the country improved, our people fully and profitably employed, and the public countenance exhibiting tranquillity, contentment, and happiness, and if we descend into particulars, we have the agreeable contemplation of a people out of debt, land rising slowly in value, but in a secure and salutary degree; a ready, though not extravagant, market for all the surplus productions of our industry; innumerable flocks and herds browsing and gambling on a thousand hills and plains, covered with rich and verdant grasses; our cities expanded, and whole villages springing up, as it were, by enchantment; our exports and imports increased and increasing; our tonnage, foreign and coastwise, swelling and fully occupied; the rivers of our interior animated by the perpetual thunder and lightning of countless steamboats; the currency sound and abundant, the public debt of two wars nearly redeemed, and, to crown all, the public treasury overflowing, embarrassing Congress not to find subjects of taxation, but to select the objects

which shall be liberated from impost. If the term of seven years were to be selected of the greatest prosperity which the people have enjoyed since the establishment of their present constitution, it would be exactly that period of seven years which immediately followed the passage of the tariff of 1824.

“This transformation of the condition of the country from gloom and distress to brightness and prosperity has been mainly the work of American legislation, fostering American industry instead of allowing it to be controlled by foreign legislation cherishing foreign industry. The foes of the American system in 1824, with great boldness and confidence, predicted, first, the union of the public revenue, and the creation of a necessity to resort to direct taxation. The gentleman from South Carolina (General Hayne), I believe, thought the tariff of 1824 would operate a reduction of revenue to the large amount of eight millions of dollars. Second, the destruction of our navigation. Third, the dissolution of commercial cities, and, fourth, the augmentation of the price of objects of consumption, and, further, decline in that of the articles of our exports. Every prediction which they made has failed—utterly failed. Instead of the ruin of the public revenue, with which they then sought to deter us from the adoption of the American system, we are now threatened with its subversion, by the vast amount of the public revenue produced by that system.

“Whilst we thus behold the entire failure of all that was foretold against the system, it is a subject of just felicitation, to its friends, that all their anticipations of its benefits have been fulfilled or are in process of fulfillment. The honorable gentleman from South Carolina



has made an allusion to a speech made by me in 1824, in the other House, in support of the tariff, and to which, otherwise, I should not have particularly referred. But I would ask anyone who can now command the courage to peruse that long production, what principle there laid down is not true? What prediction then made has been falsified by practical experience?

“It is now proposed to abolish the system, to which we owe so much of the public prosperity, and it is urged that the arrival of the period of the redemption of the public debt has been confidently looked to as presenting a suitable occasion to rid the country of evils with which the system is alleged to be fraught. Not an inattentive observer of passing events, I have been aware that, among those who were most early pressing the payment of the public debt, and upon that ground were opposing appropriations to other great interests, there were some who cared less about the debt than the accomplishment of other objects. But the people of the United States have not coupled the payment of *their* public debt with the destruction of the protection of *their* industry against foreign laws and foreign industry. They have been accustomed to regard the extinction of the public debt as a relief from a burden, and not as the infliction of a curse. If it is to be attended or followed by the subversion of the American system, and an exposure of our establishments and our productions to the unguarded consequences of the selfish policy of foreign powers, the payment of the public debt will be the bitterest of curses. Its fruits will be like the fruit

‘Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden.’

"If the system of protection be founded on principles erroneous in theory and pernicious in practice—above all if it be unconstitutional, as is alleged, it ought to be forthwith abolished, and not a vestige of it suffered to remain. But before we sanction this sweeping denunciation, let us look a little at this system, its magnitude, its ramifications, its duration, and the high authorities which have sustained it. We shall see that its foes will have accomplished comparatively nothing, after having achieved their present aim of breaking down our iron foundries, our woollen, cotton and hemp manufactories and our sugar plantations. The destruction of these would, undoubtedly, lead to the sacrifice of immense capital, the ruin of many thousands of our fellow-citizens and incalculable loss to the whole community. But their prostration would not disfigure nor produce greater effect upon the whole system of protection, in all its branches, than the destruction of the beautiful domes upon the Capitol would occasion to the magnificent edifice which they surmount. Why, sir, there is scarcely an interest, scarcely a vocation in society, which is not embraced by the beneficence of this system. It comprehends our coasting tonnage and trade, from which all foreign tonnage is absolutely excluded. It includes all our foreign tonnage, with the inconsiderable exception made by treaties of reciprocity with a few foreign powers.

"It embraces our fisheries and all our hardy and enterprising fishermen.

"It extends to almost every mechanical art.

"It extends to all lower Louisiana, the delta of which might as well be submerged again in the Gulf of Mexico, from which it has been a gradual conquest, as now to be

deprived of the protecting duty upon its great staple. It affects the cotton planter himself, and the tobacco planter, both of whom enjoy protection. . . .

“ When gentlemen have succeeded in their design of an immediate or gradual destruction of the American system, what is their substitute?—Free trade! Free trade!

“ The cry for free trade is as unavailing as the cry of a spoiled child, in its nurse’s arms, for the moon or the stars that glitter in the firmament of heaven. It never has existed, it never will exist. Trade implies at least two parties. To be free it should be fair, equal and reciprocal. But if we throw our ports wide open to the admission of foreign productions, free of all duty, what ports of any other foreign nation shall we find open to the free admission of our surplus produce? We may break down all barriers to free trade on our part, but the work will not be complete until foreign powers shall have removed theirs. There would be freedom on our side, and restrictions, prohibitions and exclusions on the other. The bolts and the bars and the chains of all other nations will remain undisturbed. It is, indeed, possible that our industry and commerce would accommodate themselves to this unequal and unjust state of things; for, such is the flexibility of our nature, that it bends itself to all circumstances. The wretched prisoner incarcerated in a jail after a long time becomes reconciled to his solitude, and regularly notches down the passing days of his confinement.

“ Gentlemen deceive themselves. It is not free trade that they are recommending to our acceptance, it is in effect the British colonial system that we are invited to

adopt, and if their policy prevail it will lead substantially to the re-colonization of these states, under the commercial dominion of Great Britain. . . . I pass with pleasure to two general propositions which cover the entire ground of debate. The first is that, under the operation of the American system, the objects which it protects and fosters are brought to the consumer at cheaper prices than they commanded prior to its introduction or than they would command if it did not exist. If that be true, ought not the country to be contented and satisfied with the system, unless the second proposition, which I mean also presently to consider, is unfounded? And that is that the tendency of the system is to sustain, and that it has upheld, the prices of all our agricultural and other produce, including cotton.

“And is the fact not indisputable that all essential objects of consumption affected by the tariff are cheaper and better since the act of 1824 than they were for several years prior to that law? I appeal for its truth to common observation and to all practical men. I appeal to the farmer of the country, whether he does not purchase on better terms his iron, salt, brown sugar, cotton goods, and woolens for his laboring people? And I ask the cotton planter if he has not been, and more cheaply, supplied with his cotton bagging? In regard to this latter article, the gentleman from South Carolina was mistaken in supposing that I complained that under the existing duty the Kentucky manufacturer could not compete with the Scotch. The Kentuckian furnishes a more substantial and cheaper article, and at a more uniform and regular price. But it was the frauds, the violations of law, of which I did complain, not smuggling

in the common sense of that practice, which has something bold; daring and enterprising in it, but mean, barefaced cheating by fraudulent invoices and false denomination. I plant myself upon this fact of cheapness and superiority as upon impregnable ground. Gentlemen may tax their ingenuity and produce a thousand speculative solutions of the fact, but the fact itself will remain undisturbed. This brings me to consider what I apprehend to have been the most efficient of all the causes in the reduction of the prices of manufactured articles, and that is *competition*. By competition the total amount of the supply is increased, and by increase of the supply a competition in the sale ensues and thus enables the consumer to buy at lower rates. Of all human powers operating on the affairs of mankind none is greater than that of competition. It is action and reaction. It operates between individuals in the same nation and between different nations. It resembles the meeting of the mountain torrent, grooving, by its precipitous motion, its own channel and ocean's tide. Unopposed, it sweeps everything before it; but counterpoised, the waters become safe, calm and regular. It is like the segments of a circle or an arch; taken separately, each is nothing; but in their combination they produce efficiency, symmetry and perfection. By the American system this vast power has been excited in America, and brought into being to act in co-operation or collision with European industry. Europe acts within itself and with America, and America acts within itself and with Europe. The consequence is, the reduction of prices in both hemispheres. Nor is it fair to argue from the reduction of prices in Europe to her own presumed skill

and labor exclusively. We affect her prices and she affects ours. This must always be the case, at least in reference to any articles as to which there is not a total nonintercourse; and if our industry, by diminishing the demand for her supplies, should produce a diminution in the price of those supplies, it would be very unfair to ascribe that reduction to her ingenuity instead of placing it to the credit of our own skill and excited industry.

“The great law of *price* is determined by supply and demand. Whatever affects either affects the price. If the supply is increased, the demand remaining the same, the price declines; if the demand is increased, the supply remaining the same, the price advances; if both supply and demand are undiminished, the price is stationary, and the price is influenced exactly in proportion to the degree of disturbance to the demand or supply. It is, therefore, a great error to suppose that an existing or new duty *necessarily* becomes a component element to its exact amount of price. If the proportion of demand and supply are varied by the duty either in augmenting the supply or diminishing the demand, or *vice versa*, price is affected to the extent of the variation. But the duty never becomes an integral part of the price, except in the instance where the demand and the supply remain, after the duty is imposed, precisely what they were before, or the demand is increased and the supply remains stationary. . . . Gentlemen have allowed to the manufacturing portions of the community no peace; they have been constantly threatened with the overthrow of the American system. From the year 1820, if not from 1816, down to this time they have

been held in a condition of constant alarm and insecurity. Nothing is more prejudicial to the great interests of a nation than unsettled and varying policy. Although every appeal to the National Legislature has been responded to in conformity with the wishes and sentiments of the great majority of the people, measures of protection have only been carried by such small majorities as to excite hopes on the one hand and fears on the other. Let the country breathe, let its vast resources be developed, let its energy be fully put forth, let it have tranquillity, and my word for it, the degree of perfection in the arts which it will exhibit, will be greater than that which has been presented, astonishing as our progress has been. Although some branches of our manufacture might, and in foreign markets now do, fearlessly contend with similar foreign fabrics, there are many others yet in their infancy struggling with the difficulties which encompass them. We should look at the whole system, and recollect that time, when we contemplate the movements of a nation, is very different from the short period which is allotted for the duration of individual life. The honorable gentleman from South Carolina very eloquently said, in 1824: 'No great interest of any country ever yet grew up in a day; no new branch of industry can become firmly and profitably established, but in a long course of years; everything, indeed, great or good is matured by slow degrees; that which attains a speedy maturity is of small value and is destined to a brief existence. It is the order of Providence that powers gradually developed shall alone attain permanency and perfection. Thus must it be with our natural institutions and national character itself.' "

These extracts will serve to show the grace and beauty of the style of Henry Clay, and that, too, upon his favorite theme, the American or Protective system, the same subject we are discussing to-day.

A further example will be added, thereby introducing a new topic of great interest and another eminent orator and statesman, John C. Calhoun.

The disposition of the money derived from the public lands gave rise, as we have seen, to one of the most animated and important debates in the annals of American history, that between Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, and Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts. The same subject, also, was the source of earnest and interesting controversy in 1841, between other American statesmen, among whom were Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun.

Mr. Clay said:—

“Mr. President, although I find myself borne down by the severest affliction with which Providence has ever been pleased to visit me, I have thought that my private griefs ought not longer to prevent me, ill as I feel qualified to discharge my public duties, and I now rise, in pursuance of the notice which has been given, to ask leave to introduce a bill to appropriate the proceeds of the sales of the public lands of the United States, and for granting lands to certain states.

“I feel it incumbent on me to make a brief explanation of the highly important measure which I have now the honor to propose. The bill which I desire to introduce provides for the distribution of the proceeds of the



public lands in the years 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, and 1837, among the twenty-four states of the Union, and conforms substantially to that which passed in 1833. It is, therefore, of a temporary character; but if it shall be found to have salutary operation, it will be in the power of a future Congress to give it an indefinite continuance; and if otherwise, it will expire by its own terms. In the event of war unfortunately breaking out with any foreign power, the bill is to cease, and the fund which it distributes is to be applied to the prosecution of the war. The bill directs that ten per cent of the net proceeds of the public funds sold within the limits of the seven new states shall be first set apart for them, in addition to the five per cent reserved by their several compacts with the United States, and that the residue of the proceeds, whether from sales made in the states or territories, shall be divided among the twenty-four states in proportion to their respective federal population. In this respect the bill conforms to that which was introduced in 1832. For one, I should have been willing to have allowed the new states twelve and a half instead of ten per cent; but as that was objected to by the President, in his veto message, and has been opposed in other quarters, I thought it best to restrict the allowance to the more moderate sum. The bill also contains large and liberal grants of land to several of the new states, to place them upon an equality with others to which the bounty of Congress has heretofore extended, and provides that when other new States shall be admitted into the Union they shall receive their share of the common fund.

“ Mr. President, I have ever regarded with feelings of

the profoundest regret the decision which the President of the United States felt himself induced to make on the bill of 1833. If the bill had passed, twenty millions of dollars would have been, during the last three years, in the hands of the several states, applicable by them to the beneficent purposes of internal improvement, education or colonization. What immense benefits might not have been diffused throughout the land by the active employment of that vast sum! What new channels of commerce and communication might not have been opened! What industry stimulated, what labor rewarded! How many youthful minds might have received the blessings of education and knowledge, and been rescued from ignorance, vice and ruin! How many descendants of Africa might have been transported from a country where they never can enjoy political or social equality, to the native land of their fathers, where no impediment exists to their attainment of the highest degree of elevation, intellectual, social and political, where they might have been successful instruments, in the hands of God, to spread the religion of his Son, and to lay the foundation of civil liberty!

“But although we have lost three precious years, the Secretary of the Treasury tells us that this vast sum is yet safe, and much good may yet be achieved with it. The spirit of improvement pervades the land in every variety of form, active, vigorous and enterprising, wanting pecuniary aid as well as intelligent direction. The states are strengthening the Union by various lines of communication thrown across and through the mountains. New York has completed one great chain, Pennsylvania another, bolder in conception, and more ardu-

ous in the execution. Virginia has a similar work in progress, worthy of all her enterprise and energy. A fourth, further south, where the parts of the Union are too loosely connected, has been projected, and it can certainly be executed with the supplies which this bill affords, and perhaps not without them.

"This bill passed, and those and other similar undertakings completed, we may indulge the patriotic hope that our Union will be bound by ties and interests that render it indissoluble. As the general government withholds all direct agency from these truly national works, and from all new objects of internal improvement, ought it not to yield to the states, what is their own, the amount received from the public lands? It could thus but execute faithfully a trust expressly created by the original deeds of cession or resulting from the treaties of acquisition. With this ample resource, every desirable object of improvement, in every part of our extensive country, may in due time be accomplished. Placing this exhaustless fund in the hands of several members of the confederacy, their common federal head may address them in the glowing language of the British bard, and—

' Bid harbors open, public way extend,  
Bid temples worthier of the God ascend,  
Bid the broad arch the dangerous flood contain,  
The mole projecting break the waring main,  
Back to his bounds their subject sea command,  
And roll obedient rivers through the land.'

"I confess I feel anxious for the fate of this measure, less on account of any agency I have had in proposing it, as I hope and believe, than from a firm, sincere, and thorough conviction that no one measure ever presented

to the councils of the nation, was fraught with so much unmingled good and could exert such powerful and enduring influence in the preservation of the Union itself and upon some of its highest interests. If I can be instrumental in any degree in the adoption of it, I shall enjoy, in that retirement into which I hope shortly to enter, a heart-feeling satisfaction and lasting consolation. I shall carry there no regrets, no complaints, no reproaches on my account. When I look back upon my humble origin, left an orphan, too young to have been conscious of a father's smiles and caresses, with a widowed mother, surrounded by a numerous offspring, in the midst of pecuniary embarrassments, without a regular education, without fortune, without friends, without patrons, I have reason to be satisfied with my public career. I ought to be thankful for the high places and honors to which I have been called by the favor and partiality of my countrymen, and I am thankful and grateful. And I shall take with me the pleasing consciousness that in whatever station I have been placed, I have earnestly and honestly labored to justify their confidence, by a faithful, fearless, and zealous discharge of my public duties. Pardon these personal allusions."

On the other side of this measure, John C. Calhoun, a member from South Carolina, spoke as follows:—

"Whether the government can constitutionally distribute the revenue from the public lands among the states, must depend on the fact whether they belong to them in their united federal character, or individually and separately. If in the former, it is manifest that

the government, as their common agent or trustee, can have no right to distribute among them, for their individual, separate use, a fund derived from property held in their united and federal character without a special power for that purpose which is not pretended. A position so clear of itself, and resting on the established principles of law which applied to individuals holding property in like manner, needs no illustration. If, on the contrary, they belong to the states in their individual and separate character, then the government would not only have the right, but would be bound, to apply the revenue to the separate use of the states. So far is incontrovertible, which presents the question, In which of the two characters are the lands held by the state?

"To give a satisfactory answer to this question, it will be necessary to distinguish between the lands that have been ceded by the states and those that have been purchased by the government out of the common funds of the Union.

"The principal cessions were made by Virginia and Georgia, the former, of all the tract of country between the Ohio, the Mississippi, and the lakes, including the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan and the territory of Wisconsin, and the latter, of the tract included in Alabama and Mississippi. I shall begin with the cession of Virginia, as it is on that the advocates for the distribution mainly rely to establish the right.

"I hold in my hand an extract of all that portion of the Virginia deed of cession which has any bearing on the point at issue, taken from the volume lying on the table before me, with the place marked, and to which

anyone desirous of examining the deed may refer. The cession is 'to the United States in Congress assembled for the benefit of said states.' Every word implies the states in their united and federal character. That is the meaning of the phrase 'United States.' It stands in contradistinction to the states taken separately and individually, and if there could be, by possibility, any doubt on that point, it would be removed by the expression in 'Congress assembled'—an assemblage which constituted the very knot that united them. I regard the execution of such a deed to the United States, so assembled, so conclusive that the cession was to them in their united and aggregate character, in contradistinction to their individual and separate character, and by necessary consequence that the lands so ceded belonged to them in their former and not to their latter character, that I am at a loss for words to make it clearer. To deny it would be to deny that there is any truth in language. But strong as this is, it is not all. The deed proceeds and says that all the lands so ceded 'shall be considered a common fund for the use and benefit of such of the United States as have become, or shall become, members of the confederation or federal alliance of said states, Virginia included,' and concludes by saying, 'And shall be faithfully and *bona fide* disposed of for that purpose, and for no other use or purpose whatever.' If it were possible to raise a doubt before, these full, clear, and explicit terms would dispel it. It is impossible for language to be clearer. To be 'considered a common fund, is an expression directly in contradistinction to separate or individual, and is, by necessary implication, as clear a negative of the latter as if it had been positively expressed. This 'common

fund' is to 'be for the use and benefit of such of the United States as have become, or shall become, members of the confederation or federal alliance.' That is as clear as language can express it, for their common use in their united federal character, Virginia being included as the greater, out of abundant caution.

"The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Clay), and, as I now understand, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Webster), agree that the revenue from taxes can be applied only to the objects specifically enumerated in the Constitution, thus repudiating the general welfare principle, as applied to the money power, so far as the revenue may be derived from that source. To this extent they profess to be good State Rights Jeffersonian Republicans. Now, sir, I would be happy to be informed by either of the able Senators, by what political alchemy the revenue from taxes, by being vested in land, or other property, can, when again turned into revenue by sales, be entirely freed from all the constitutional restrictions to which they were liable before the investment, according to their own confessions. A satisfactory explanation of so curious and apparently incomprehensible process would be a treat.

"When I look, Mr. President, to what induced the states, and especially Virginia, to make this magnificent cession to the Union, and the high and patriotic motives urged by the old Congress to induce them to do it, and turn to what is now proposed, I am struck with the contrast and the great mutation to which human affairs are subject. The great and patriotic men of former times regarded it as essential to the consummation of the Union and the preservation of the public faith that the

lands should be ceded as a common fund; but now men distinguished for their ability and influence, are striving with all their might to undo their holy work. Yes, sir, distribution and cession are the very reverse, in character and effect; the tendency of one is to union, and the other is disunion. The wisest of modern statesmen, and who had the keenest and deepest glance into futurity, Edmund Burke, truly said that the revenue is the state; to which I add that to distribute the revenue, in a confederated community, amongst its members, is to dissolve the community—that is, with us, the Union—as time will prove, if ever this fatal measure should be adopted."p.





